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Edited by AUSTIN HARRISON

APRIL 1916

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	R. D. de Maratray
	Percy Thomas
A Bunch of Violets	Filson Young
A Keeper of the Doors	Caradoc Evans
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Concerning Secret Agents	Major Stuart-Stephens
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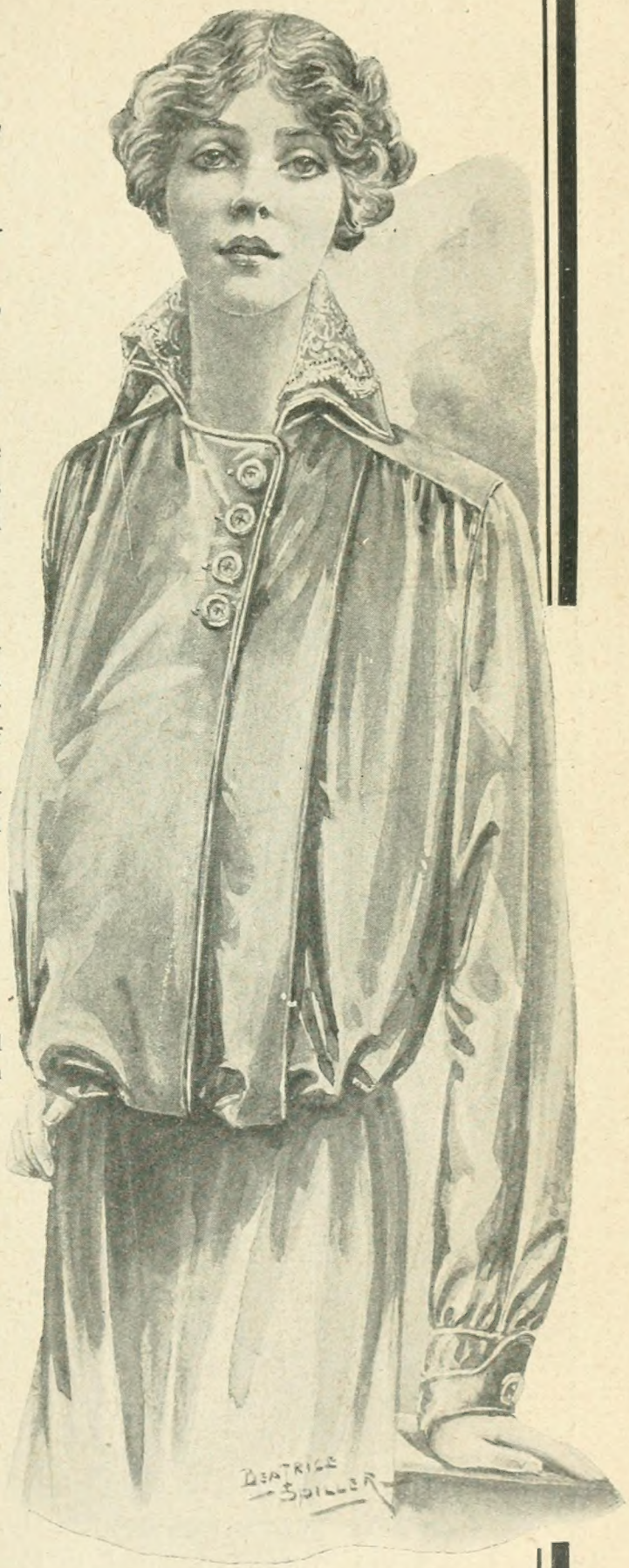

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THE ENGLISH REVIEW

Edited by Austin Harrison

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SERBIAN APPEAL.

The Editor of the "English Review" has most kindly permitted us to make an appeal in his Magazine for money and stores to send out under the auspices of the Wounded Allies Relief Committee to the Serbian Army at Corfu. We quote from a cable which reached us from Corfu a few days back: "We want tents, blankets, milk, tea, sugar, cognac, rum, underclothing, towels"—and remember that the men who need these necessities are dying at the rate of 100 per day, and their bodies—their poor lean starved bodies—are being thrown into the sea that rolls round the Island of Vido—the sea that is becoming a very burial field for Serbia's dead soldiers.

The Wounded Allies Relief Committee have already sent out two doctors and four nurses as well as large consignments of stores to Corfu, and we ourselves hope to be leaving quite shortly for Corfu with the next Unit and, having witnessed the fine stuff of which the soldiers are made during their great retreat, we are most anxious to take all we can to these heroic men.

Financial donations should be sent to the Hon. Treasurer, Wounded Allies Relief Committee, T. O. ROBERTS, Manager, London County & Westminster Bank, Ltd., 217, Strand, W.C., and marked "Serbian Fund." The smallest donation in the way of stores would be most gratefully welcomed if sent to Mrs. CLAUDE ASKEW, Serbian Fund, Wounded Allies Relief Committee, Sardinia House, Kingsway, London, W.C.

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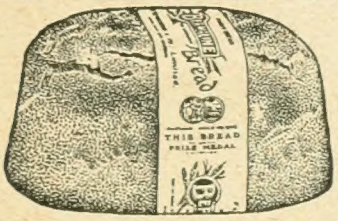

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THE

ENGLISH REVIEW

APRIL, 1916

Spring Song

By H. T. W. Bousfield

THE sunlight clings to the almond tree,
The brown lark sings to his mate below,
The wild rose welcomes the honey bee
In the green hedgerow;
And the old gods cry in the Spring o' th' year:
"God's in His Heaven—but we are here."

A mile away or a world away
The scream of battle affrights the skies,
Where slain men rot and the young rats play
At their empty eyes,
And the pale king leans on his dripping spear:
"God's in His Heaven—but I am here!"

The bindweed covers the nameless dead,
The ploughman shouts to his straining team,
The young grass springs where the earth was red,
Where the white bones gleam,
And a soul still cries from his naked bier:
"God's in His Heaven—but I am here!"

The petals fall and the sunlight fades,
The dead are naught but the mighty dead,
They cry and whisper, but they are shades
And young lips are red,
And lad's love shouts in the Spring o' th' year:
"God's in His Heaven—but I am here!"

The Wraith

By John Gurdon

Do you hear me in the sleety darkness crying?
Do you hear me now against your casement beating?
On the black wind round the eaves and gables flying,
Inarticulate, the voice of my entreating
Roams miserable in the cold and night.

Once my fingers swept the lute-strings and I sung you
Songs of many colours, beautiful and tender:
And the blossom of my life I plucked and flung you
For the token and a gage of all surrender—
Yea, my soul-flower with leaves of silver light.

Now, a naked grief, I wander, weeping, lonely,
Whose lament is but the cadenced ululation
Of the tempest; who for finger-touch have only
Flaws that flutter as the wings of desolation
At your lattice, O belovèd and my bane!

Ay, belovèd, for your sake am I forsaken;
For your fire-lit warmth the cold and dark enfold me;
For the ransom of your life my life was taken.
Ah, fling wide your window, dear, and kiss me, hold me
Once again!
Woe's me! How can you clasp the wind and rain?

À une dame blanche écossaise, mi-bacchante et mi-puritaine

By R. D. de Maratray

Recevoir un présent de vous, chère, pour l'an nouveau,
C'est trop et l'on ne sait que mettre en la balance.
On se trouve confus et plein de repentance
A songer qu'on ne peut rétablir le niveau.

Vous êtes un rosier de grâces renaissantes
Rayonnant de senteurs fines et de pâleurs
Parfumant les plaisirs, embaumant les douleurs,
Dans un geste muet d'offrandes caressantes.

Et s'il était permis de former, à Noël,
Un vœu qui fut païen et presque sacrilège,
On aimerait—tel Philémon—le privilège
De croître et de pointer, contre nous, vers le ciel.

En vous frôlant ainsi, d'une chaste harmonie,
On vous ferait sentir, bien mieux qu'avec des mots,
Que rester loin de vous est le plus grand des maux
Et que le plus grand don, c'est votre compagnie.

"Dame blanche" est une expression de Maurice Donnay pour designer les "nurses."

Dreams

By Percy Thomas

Mine are the dreams of one who knows
Little of earth's more poignant throes
Of rapture and grief, for my days have been
Tempered by fortune of gentle mien.
My joys have been those that a book imparts,
And traffic, in love, with children's hearts,
And sleep, and the lovely green of Spring,
And the sea 'neath the moonlight's pavilioning.
My sorrows: the children's fleeting woes;
The birds' last song at Autumn's close;
And vigils at dawn, when the faint, sweet strain
Of a bugle from childhood rings again.
But well I know that my lot decrees
Hours that are mournfuller far than these;
When memory will steal on desirous wing
Back to this kindlier sorrowing.
And it may be that joys of more passionate sway
Will lavish their grace in my lowly way;
But, if sweet peace from my heart be driven,
Then shall I dwell in an alien heaven,
Longing for joys of a day gone by,
And their boon of unsullied tranquillity.

A Bunch of Violets

By Filson Young

GREAT men inspire great tributes; but smaller offerings of a more homely fragrance may have their place by the empty bier when the ceremonies of death are over. Death brings the various phases of a life, its affections, achievements, values, into focus; and in that moment of salutation and farewell when we stand recollecting, sorrowing, and giving thanks, what was best and soundest in human relationship as between us and the dead comes to a momentary and ghostly blossoming Too brief, indeed, is that good moment; we turn away, go back to the world, and, having paid our tribute, speak and think of other things. It is only for a very little while after the death of a man like Henry James that people will care to read or hear about him; although here and there some friendly soul will desire to turn back to the place of parting, if only to lay a bunch of violets in an empty place.

Henry James has been described, because of his valour and sufferings for and with England in this hour, as a national hero. Surely that is not quite a fair way of describing him—if only because it challenges one's sense of proportion. It does not seem the most illuminating way in which to speak of this quiet, sensitive man of heart and imagination, just because he suffered in the degree to which his equipment for suffering laid him open. In the little world of art Henry James was a great man; and in saying that the artist pays the highest tribute that he can. I say the little world of art, because it is really a little world, incalculably great as its influence may be. No one who looks round at life to-day can very successfully pretend that the world of art and the spirit is particularly great or highly esteemed or deeply believed in and regarded by the human race. It is a small, and in these days even an obscure company, but in it Henry James was truly great. True,

a man may be a hero without desiring to be one, nor does a taste for heroics qualify a man for that crowning title. But one almost ventures to say that it is the last kind of thing that dear old Henry James would have wished to be called. His was a profoundly sensitive soul, shrinking from contacts, veiling and veiling itself in dew-lighted webs that were gossamer to the touch of affection, but opaque to the common view. I doubt if there were three men in London among the many who loved him, and whom he loved, with whom Henry James was entirely at his ease. He was more completely at ease with certain women—not necessarily the cleverest women of his circle, but perhaps the most womanly and understanding; old friends whose familiar company fitted him like an easy garment, by whom his sensitiveness was never alarmed, and who could take easily and gracefully, yet not obtrusively, their intellectual place at his feet and their women's place in his heart.

There was something almost amusing in the little embarrassments of cordial relationship with Henry James. He was one who put into words far more successfully than most men what he really felt and thought; and even if you knew what he felt and thought he would not allow you to take it for granted, but, with whatever labours and pains, would insist upon getting it accurately and wonderfully said. That really was one of the most interesting things about him. People grow careless as they grow older; they use a kind of conversational shorthand, or they simply content themselves with commonplaces or *clichés*. Henry James wished always that his speech should express his mind; and as his mind was not in the least like other people's, neither was his speech.

Here, in a letter addressed to a friend who had written something about him, is an example of the way Henry James said what most men, if they had said anything at all, would have scribbled in a few conventional phrases:—

"How can I not express to you my lively appreciation of your beautiful remarks on my somewhat abortive (as I felt at the time) contribution to the Browning affair on Tuesday? —and this, even though such candour and gratitude must rather resemble that of a child with his mouth too replete with strawberry jam to be able (or to need) to attest with words that strawberry jam is the finest thing in the world.

I still smack my lips over the splendid great spoonful that you have publicly administered to me, and can only say that—well, that the taste is delicious. Let me add that you cheer me up as against my considerably depressed sense that my subject (that view of a particular aspect that I had to choose—R. B. in general being much too large an order—) was essentially thankless and technical, too utterly *literary* to be comprehended by a promiscuous and largely female multitude. I felt myself really demoralised and inaudible before I had half done with it. But I rejoice that I reached *you* and a few others, and shall presently try to reach you in particular again—to effect a further communion with your happy intelligence."

That letter, if you look closely at it, is as exact in its phraseology as a legal document—the kind of document that is really meant to define and not to obscure the exact meaning of something. It was so with his speech and it is so in his books. Mr. Gosse, in his fine words of tribute the other day, spoke of our proclaiming to the "sensual world" the true importance and value of Henry James's work. I quite agree; and although the "sensual world" thinks that it cannot read Henry James because he is too involved and obscure, I would assure the sensual world that the obscurity is not in Henry James's mind, but in its own. And I will even dare to say that there is a sense in which the books of Henry James are simple books, and that what appear to be mere convolutions of style are the authentic processes of a man's mind reaching from one idea to another. If you will take Henry James's hand, and surrender your mind to his mind, and let him lead you, he will make his meaning plain to you; he will not spare himself trouble, and it is only attention and not trouble that he will exact from you. Such writing is the most perfectly sincere writing in the world, because it expresses its meaning and only its meaning—nothing more nor less; and in that sense it is simple. Incidentally, what he has to express is nearly always deeply interesting; and even the sensual world would find it so, if it would pay attention.

But when one has said all that one can possibly say about Henry James's writing, one is far from having accounted for him altogether. There remains that other real part of him that was intimate and personal, that he

did not express in any book—the fact, in short, that he was a dear old man, with a warm heart and exquisite manners, that he could dislike things and shrink from them with an intenseness happily equal to that with which he could love and draw near to them. We must remember, for our comfort, that such natures live more largely and fully than the less sensitive; and that for what they suffer they are indemnified by delicate, secret, and intense happinesses, as well as by the visions and Pisgah views that cheer and give direction to an often weary and sorrowful way.

A Keeper of the Doors

By Caradoc Evans

On a morning Sara Llain—Llain is the zinc-roofed house that is against Big Spout of fresh water—addressed Essec her husband: "Near perishing, woe me, am I."

Essec answered: "What, old ox, is the matter with you to disturb my sleep? Odd talk you make through the back head of your neck."

"Serious is my speech, little Essec," said Sara. "Over laboured am I. Be you a boy bach nice, and clean the cowhouse of the filth."

Essec settled his countenance and rebuked Sara. Then he lamented: "Well—well, iss; well—well, no. A weak dear one have I been since I came to your bed. My man used to make words: 'Lustful wench is Sara Llain. Temptful is the wench in her bed, son bach of my heart.'" Essec turned his back upon Sara and slept.

At the middle of the day his wife came up on his bed in all her garments, and she shrieked because of the pain that tormented her, and she complained that she would not recover of her disease. Before the light of the day was spent, Essec awoke, and he was angry.

"An old woman cruel you are," he said. "If I was not feeble, one in the bone of your cheek I would give you straight."

"There's hurts in me!" Sara cried. She displaced the shawls that were over her bodice and the shawls that were under her bodice, and she beat her hands upon her breast.

"The Angel of the White Shirt is very near, female," said Essec.

"Wishful am I, man, that he was on me," said Sara.

Essec got down from his bed and went to Shop Tailor—which is between the Garden of Eden and the Schoolhouse—and Shonni Tailor said to him: "What is your errand, shall I say?"

"Why for you squander breath, the man?" Essec replied. "Solemn to have a corpse in your little house."

"Provoke me you do," said Shonni Tailor. "Mouth plain in my hearing."

"Flying is Sara, indeed me, Shonni. Is not her feet in the Jordan already?"

"Bad jasto, now!" said Shonni. "Act you religious, and ask me to pray on the Night of Woe."

Essec admonished Shonni: "Shonni, indeed, wasteful speecher you are. Look you, make at once in a haste respectable clothes for to bury Sara in. Very black must they be, for wet will be my weeping. See here, put a flap fach on the trousers."

When Essec arrived home he put water in a cauldron, which he hung in the chimney over the fire, and he spoke to Sara: "Making old water hot am I to wash you, female. Clean shall your perished corpse be on the Night of Woe. Say a prayer will I now in your hearing. Merciful will the Big Husband be that you are the woman of Essec Llain."

Having prayed, he visited the places where the hens had their nests, and gathered together all the eggs, even the rotten eggs which are left to entice the hens to lay; and he put all these eggs and also those which had been collected in a basket and took them to Shop Rhys, and the value of them was the price he paid for a White Shirt of the Dead.

Then Essec lay by the side of his wife.

Now the man was lazy from his youth up. He slept near to the end of the days, except the day of the Sabbath, whence he arose early to go and take charge of the doors of Sion. Thus he was become very fat. The labour of the six acres of land which are with Llain was performed by Sara, whose passion was inflamed because of the man's indolence. She voiced spiteful sayings against him on the Tramping Road and in Shop Rhys; how his worth was less than the worth of an ass, how his bones were without marrow, how constant toil had blighted her fertility. Even so, Essec had a name in Sion: he made monthly sacrifices of a white-hearted cabbage, or a sackful of potatoes, or a weight of butter to the Ruler of the Pulpit; and this was a proverb in the district: "Prayer bach very eloquent is Essec Llain."

In the morning Sara's pains were decreased, and she fulfilled divers labours in and about her house. She considered her husband's sluggishness, whereon her wrath was fierce. She exclaimed at the side of his bed: "Come out, you putrid clown. Why for you are like a sow?" and she took her clog from her left foot and struck his head with the heel of it.

"Don't you vex me, the accursed Sara," said Essec. "What for you hit my little face? Saying things am I about your old corpse to the Big Man."

"Clap your lips, you swine of a toad," said Sara. "By sloth you were conceived. Ach y fi, eighteen years old was I when I married you, and for five years I have not had minutes to change my garments in."

In his distress Essec reported her words and act to the Seiet of the Congregation, and he grieved that the woman's heart was turned apart from religion, and he said: "There's struggle will I with the Big Man, people bach, when he comes up from Pool of Fire to fetch her."

He chose a portion of the burial ground beneath which Sara should be buried, saying: "Tell you, will I, boys Capel Sion, when I hear the old Spirit Hounds." Yet he pleaded with the Judge of Sion not to withhold from Sara the Palace of White Shirts.

The spring of the year passed, and the hurts of her affliction were come back upon Sara, and it was so that she continued to trim the land which gave her little and robbed her of her flesh. She was revengeful against her husband: in the mornings she took away the clothes from off his bed until not one remained over him.

"Lift your bald head, you frog," she reviled him.

Essec was careless.

Sara urged him to go into the hayfields of her neighbours, but he did not change his habit in any manner, and he stayed on his bed unto the cool of the evenings.

One Sabbath Shonni Tailor said to him: "Indeed to goodness, Essec bach, boast did you that Sara's clogs were in the Jordan. Longish was the prayer I worded for the Night of Woe. A bad blackguard you are to tell a lie, the man."

Wherefore Essec got ashamed; had he not said: "Is not her feet in the Jordan already?"

"Shonni bach nice," he answered, "every day I watch for the Angel of the White Shirts. Weep I will when he draws nigh to Llain."

The Angel came presently. Sara was labouring in a man's hayfield. In the strong heat of the day she yelled: "Boys bach, hurts are in me," and she fell upon the ground. The people who were working encompassed her. The wife of the owner of the hay reproached them: "Go you off, persons bach. Much has to be done yet." She dipped an apron in the water of the ditch that is in the field, and spread it on Sara's forehead; and she hid Sara's face from the heat of the sun with hay. In the dusk of the day Shonni Tailor raised Sara from the floor of the field and carried her easily to Llain, and he said to Essec: "Religious glory is awaiting you, man bach. Is not the Angel of the White Shirts on his way to your abode?"

"Off, then, now," said Essec, "and voice that Essec Llain will wrestle with the Bad Man."

Essec took away the clothes and shawls that were about Sara and washed the body of her, and put on her the White Shirt of the Dead; and he prepared great provision. Moreover, he took a box and made a hole through the lid of it, and he set it on the window-sill by Sara's bed. At last weariness overcame him and he went and rested in the cowhouse.

The great people of Sion came into Llain, and also small people were come with tin pitchers to carry water from Big Spout, and the house was full from the end of the parlour to the fireplace; the praying men prayed and the singing men and women sang, and the many who departed to milk their cows returned and stayed in the house until the middle of the day, when Sara died.

After all had eaten of the provision, even of the victuals which they had brought in honour of the dead, Shonni Tailor came into the cowhouse and said to Essec: "Grease your boots, Essec, now, and wear your respectable black clothes, and come in and say: 'Shonni Tailor will pray last on the Night of Woe.' Rise, you, boy bach nice; Sara is in the Jordan."

Essec answered: "Don't say! There's wet will be my weeping when I wake."

THE WAR OF LIBERATION

Suvla Bay (i)

By Juvenis

Our search for comfort in the bowels of the little ship was not too well rewarded. She had not been built for the Mediterranean, and still less for the stealthy transport of a battalion to Gallipoli by night. Every porthole was screwed down and boarded over to conceal the lights, and there were no fans below. The result was an ill-savoured furnace. Not knowing when we might be called upon to land, we could not afford to strip; so to sleep below was out of the question; we poured with sweat, and finished up on the closely-packed deck. The night fell suddenly, and we slowed down for fear of reaching the rendezvous too early. With the fall of darkness came the extinction of pipes and cigarettes (enemy's submarines are credited with powerful sight). On deck the wind was cold, the boards were sticky with salt dew, and hard. We longed for the dawn.

Just before dawn, at about three o'clock, hot tea was issued to us all, and stumbling down the ladder from the boat-deck, I stepped right into a dixie-full of it, which some genius had put at the bottom of the stairs for safety! However, I found my kit and returned, without repeating the horrible incident, to join the officers on the front of the boat-deck, who were now peering through the darkness to the north-east, over the starboard bow, with field-glasses.

Soon we made out some lights, red and green, in a row; and quickly two more rows like them moving along with us. They were hospital ships.

We had scarcely realised their cheerful presence when away to the East we saw some starry rockets and shells flying and bursting high in the sky, and the twinkle of distant gun-fire. It was quite silent. We did not hear the

guns; we could not see the ships or the shore, though we felt the presence of both.

Suddenly the light began to grow and the outlines of hills and warships became just visible. When we had made out one ship then we saw them all, as fast as we turned our heads, behind us and in front, to right and to left, all gliding in towards the shore—troopships and warships silently and relentlessly gliding into the bay. On our right, by what we could now distinguish as the cliffs at Anzac, many were there already at anchor, and now we could hear the guns as well as see their sulphurous flashes on land and sea.

Then, all at once, a terrible roar broke out on the gloomy heights, the roar of rifles and machine-guns, shrapnel and high explosive; it never slackened, it never died; it seemed too loud and too innumerable to last: yet on it went, and grew. "The Australians are making a dawn attack," we said to each other, "and we shall be too late." Still, we glided on among our fellow-transports in due order into Suvla Bay, and then, swinging round as we got into line with Lala Baba and Suvla Cape, dropped anchor in the thick of them.

It must have been then that the Turks saw the truth. What an awful and unforgettable sight we must have been to them! But soon they had more to do than watch. . . . Our lighters were creeping slowly in under the low cliffs and after a little pause long lines of men came up at the double over the top and moved across an open patch to disappear again into the scrub. We could just distinguish their separate forms through field-glasses. Hundreds and hundreds were passing, line after line, and working over to the left and front, towards a little isolated hillock. Then, after a pause, we saw the twinkling glitter of countless bayonets speeding through the bush. The shrapnel clouds grew more continuous: the crackle of rifle fire grew louder; the lines rushed on: figures now and then were visible for a moment against the scars of sand; and almost at once we could see other lines spring up with gleaming bayonets and flee into the scrub and disappear. The hill was carried. We had seen the fight as through a glass, darkly.

At last, at about four o'clock in the afternoon, when

we had been watching the battle spread out in a panorama before us for twelve hours, the lighters came alongside for us, and took off "A," "B," and "C" companies. I was in "D," so had to be content with watching for a little longer. At any rate, a personal interest was now added to the view: and the lighters would soon be back.

The three companies lost no time in getting aboard, and soon were making for the shore at Suvla Cape ("A" Beach), where already several other lighters were tied up and disembarking troops. But suddenly a little hitch arose. One of the lighters seemed to be aground. The water there was shallow and strewn with rocks; and, worse than that, as the troops just landed were re-forming on the beach, a terrific explosion took place there. Huge, yellow bursts of smoke rose up. Through our glasses we could plainly see the men near by it. They seemed to lean inwards towards the centre of the burst, and then were flung this way and that; some to lie still and some to disappear. Almost immediately several more explosions in rapid succession rent the air, and for some moments we lost sight of the troops altogether in the clouds of smoke and sand. The Turks must be tossing down gigantic shells from the Anafarta hills; or perhaps from Asia across the coveted Narrows! What marvellous shooting! They must have taken the range to a yard, for they certainly could not see the little beach. But someone told us that they were not shells, but land-mines, set off by being trodden on. I was thankful our battalion was still safe upon the sea.

The time wore on apace, and the lighters were still hovering off the beach, when a thunderstorm broke out, together with a wind that lashed the sea from a dead calm into foam-crested waves. It lasted nearly an hour and all was calm again.

The storm seemed to have changed the colour of the whole scene. Light khaki-drill was a dull brown, the scrub was greener, the flashes from the guns a lemoner yellow as the sun dived down behind us into the sea by Samothrace, and the first three companies of our battalion jumped on shore. We had just time to see them forming up and moving off when darkness fell. The warships kept up the cannonade, and once more, as in the early morning, we saw the twinkle of guns on distant heights.

It was midnight when a lighter came panting up at last to take us off together with the stores. The stores were put on first—boxes of ammunition, cases of rations and lime-juice, and many dixies. Lastly, we ourselves jumped on and crowded down into the lighter's belly.

The engine started, shaking us like an ancient motor-bus, and off we went. There were no lights on board and no lights on the beach, and the journey, though very short—perhaps six hundred yards—took a long time. The skipper of our new craft was almost drunk with weariness. He could scarcely stand on his feet and hardly see or hear—and was extremely irritable. He tried to lose his temper with his junior on the look-out for'ard, but was too tired to raise his voice sufficiently to swear. I have never seen a man so overworked and utterly exhausted. His uniform and face and hands were black with oil and grime. He began to munch a thick and oily sandwich listlessly.

At length, about 2 a.m., we got on shore. There were many forms around us sleeping huddled up in the sand and in the low scrub beyond it, jumbled anyhow. We found an empty patch, and there the company gathered and tumbled down and fell asleep. I went a few yards off them and lay down. There were others lying near me in the scrub. Many were groaning in their sleep.

After an hour or two I woke, and, with the company commander and my fellow-subalterns, roused up the men. We found, for the light was faintly rising now, that we had been sleeping among the wounded of another regiment. They were lying there in the sand, for the most part, though some were under a large tarpaulin, propped up at the corners on sticks. It was a hospital—or rather a clearing station, I suppose.

A few yards off two nameless wooden crosses stood over a fresh grave. A man was standing looking at them. "I suppose they like it, sir," he said, turning towards me for a moment, and then strolled away.

When the men were fallen in we moved up along a rough track through the scrub, inland. On our right, over a little mound, was the dry salt-lake. On our left a long ridge rising to about six hundred feet, running inland. A succession of spurs stretched from it to the plain. The other side of it, and behind us, was the sea.

We had so far found no trace or word of the battalion, but we had not gone far when we met the quarter-master, by a pile of packs. So there we stopped to take our packs off and to add them to the pile. We were told the regiment had gone on. So on we went to find them. A long spur running down from the left was hiding us from the enemy. When we came up to it at length we halted in the gully and got out our bully-beef and biscuits, while scouts went on for news.

It was a cheerful little gully, in the bright sun, with a dried-up water-course running through it, overhung with quite large little shrubs. Some of these were covered with pale flowers that looked like our wild roses, but which turned out to be all of one piece—petals and centre—made of a leathery substance, darkening into brown at the centre and pink at the edges. Another kind was like huge, scentless, purple mignonette. The ground was covered besides with minute-leafed wild thyme that smelled delicious as we trampled it, and withered veitch. This thyme grew crawling over the sand in patches all over Suvla Bay; and whenever the Turks, alive or dead, began to pollute the air too potently, we could generally find some slight relief in gathering thyme and crushing it between our fingers under our offended noses. While we were waiting for the scouts' return, when we had breakfasted off the bully-beef and biscuits, and the men were scratching vainly about for water in the dried-up water-course, we sat in the bush on the spur of the hill and contemplated the scene.

The sun was already very hot, and we looked with envy out to sea, across the salt-lake, at the many-coloured fleet of transports and warships (they were at it with their guns again). They looked so cool and comfortable on the calm blue sea. Below us gleamed the salt-lake, covered occasionally by a line of dots and once by some stampeding mules. Troops were still landing here and there along the beach beyond. To our right front, a mile or so away, we could see a brigade massed under cover of a low hill in the centre of the plain, as though about to debouch for an attack. Our actual lines (if they existed) across the plain were invisible, owing to the bushy scrub.

The other side of the plain, to the east, the naval shells were bursting on the hills and over Anafarta town.

Nowhere could we see any traces of our regiment, and when the scouts returned reporting nothing but Turkish snipers in the scrub directly ahead and no signs of our men to the right, we went up with the company through the gully to the left, and found at length the remnants of the battalion among whose casualties we had slept the night before. They had been relieved and were resting. They begged for water, but we were short ourselves—just one water-bottle-full each had been given us on the transport. A little had been used already on board and at breakfast this morning, and there was little doubt that many of the water-bottles were nearly empty, and chances of refilling in the future were a trifle vague. A fully-equipped soldier in such a climate is a thirsty man.

We left them, following the gully to the top of the ridge, where I chanced upon a rifle whose number-plate bore the regimental stamp. This set us on our way up over the hill, and along the path that ran just under the ridge-line itself, on the other side of the ridge. We were now moving along a tiny track, rough and dusty and strewn with boulders, parallel to the sea, that lay some five or six hundred feet below us, about three-quarters of a mile down-hill.

We had not gone far when we met a kindly general. who bade us keep straight on and look out for snipers; and after about a mile we found the battalion at last, behind a little peak rising above the rest of the ridge. It was the front of our position, and the relics of yesterday's battle lay strewn about, and were being collected—equipment, ammunition, clothing, casualties, and chunks of shells.

Every now and then the almost imperceptible breeze carried with it a whiff of carrion from our front, and snipers' bullets sighed past fitfully.

Two of our companies were extended thinly down to the sea, from battalion headquarters on the crest, which the third company was holding, together with the machine-guns, protected by a few sand-bags and rocks. The ground was so difficult as to make a decent trench an impossible dream. My own company lay in reserve along the ridge trying to put up a little cover and a little shelter from the burning sun; but the latter they could not achieve.

I sat with the "flag-waggers" and "buzzers" behind a

little sand-bag spur, and in the intervals of his buzzing and wagging talked to the signal officer.

The ridge that we were on hid Suvla Bay and the fleet. Only one ship could we see—a destroyer, anchored almost at our feet. The sea—warm, calm, and clear. We could see the bottom for hundreds of yards away from the shore, and make out the wicked-looking Kishlar Rocks, sticking right up like trees from the sea-floor to the surface, where a thin line of foam showed them just awash. We longed for a bathe.

With field-glasses we could just distinguish the men on the destroyer's bridge, who would now and then call us up with their flags to signal news. The only message I can remember being sent that day was the report of the sinking of a Turkish battleship that morning in the Sea of Marmora, a report which I later saw confirmed in the *Times* at a Lemnos hospital. For news from the fleet had to be taken with a pinch of salt sometimes—*e.g.*, "Botha landed at Krithia yesterday with 50,000 Boers"; or "Zeppelin raid on London; 80,000 casualties," besides innumerable "The Narrows forced" and "Achi Baba fallen."

After a while an officer of the Royal Naval Division came along and stopped with us for a chat. He was hot and dusty from looking for two signallers who had been missing for some time, and whom, I believe, he never found. His division had a machine-gun party on the ridge that used to make most admirable practice on the local Turks.

We began to be anxious to move on, as the day grew older and hotter and little seemed to be happening in our immediate front, though there was always the noise of firing on our right in the valley.

Of water there was no news, but rumours trickled through of a little far off on the beach a mile or two away—a place, report said, where one had to wait for hours for a turn; where many water-bottles disappeared; where many brawls occurred; where men were mad.

The day wore slowly on. Here and there a sniper's bullet found its mark, and two sweating men would bear a stretcher back along the ragged little path.

Near midday we tried to have dinner, but we could muster little appetite. The bully-beef was so very salt, and

we could spare no water to soak out the salt, so that eating made us thirstier.

In the afternoon I was told to send my platoon back to the beach with the water-bottles of all the company and try to get them filled. So off they went.

They had not been long gone when orders came for my company and another to return to Brigade Headquarters as a guard at dusk. Dusk came at length, and still my platoon had not come back from watering. The companies went off without them and I remained to bring them on behind.

At last, when it was quite dark, the platoon came straggling back among the scrub and boulders. The path was quite invisible. The men were tired. They had had a struggle for the water and a long, hot climb. We picked up our equipment and moved off along the hill to find Brigade Headquarters. It was rather like looking for plovers' eggs on a moor on a dark night, but after a weary scramble I was assisted by a sentry who had a shot at me, missing both me and the platoon; so I knew we were there at last. We were led down to the left past the Headquarters, which appeared to consist of a head or two sticking up out of the earth, to the side of a hill where the rest of the company was sleeping, and told to follow their example. But it was no easy task. The spent bullets from some action in the distance kept whistling down among us; yet no one seemed to be getting hit, and at length we fell asleep. Blankets and ground-sheets had not yet come up (we had piled them on the beach), but a respirator in its bag, inflated with a few biscuits, is an excellent pillow for a tired man.

We were up before dawn and filed down into a trench that had been dug by the R.E. the day before and ran along a big spur under the ridge; and then we realised once more that while the part of the ridge between the crest and the sea, as well as the crest itself, was in our hands, the ground to the right of it was No-man's land. So that our line at Suvla Bay on the left flank resembled the letter Z. This particular morning we were in a trench along the lower arm of this Z.

When dawn, with its special danger, was past, we moved ahead again, with only unaimed rifle-fire upon us, into a

little gully, where we were told to wait in reserve for an attack that was proceeding on our front. This was on the right of the big ridge and below it.

Those hours of waiting were none too pleasant. Unceasingly the bullets whistled over us. But as long as we did not crawl up over the spur's edge we were quite safe. Only one or two men were wounded; and they were men who had been carrying cases of iron-rations up over the rising ground behind us where we had left the trench.

The sun was blazing away at its hottest, and there was little shade—only as much as there is in the heather on a moor. Our heather was the tiniest oaks imaginable, with big green acorns and little leaves like baby holly, too prickly to sit on.

The water-bottles, brought back the night before, had been only half-filled, and little or none was left of the water now. The men were thirstier than ever. Expecting every moment to go into action, we could not send a party off to fight for water. We set a guard on the path to the beach: and lay and baked. I was unpatriotic enough to think of Lager beer.

A party of stretcher-bearers took up their position near us, waiting for the action to subside.

Now and then, above us, the bush would rustle and a man dripping with blood crawl through, a great relief spreading over his grey face at the sight of the Red Cross brassards. Wonderfully enough, from among our thirsty men, there was always one or another who came out to offer his water-bottle to the wounded.

From time to time, besides the wounded, a man beside himself with thirst, his lips all black and caked, would stumble past us. Once, indeed, one of our own men rose up with rifle and bayonet and tried to wrest a comrade's water-bottle away that had betrayed itself by an unmistakable gurgle. He was seized and disarmed before any harm was done.

We could not shoot a madman. Someone gave him a mouthful of water, and he was placed under arrest. We settled down again in the sun. Soon afterwards a dirty slip of paper was brought up to the Captain by a N.C.O. It was a note from the arrested man, begging to be sent at once upon any dangerous job that might assist the company.

The note was very sincere. The man was told to dig a latrine and then released.

It was at about this time that the ravages of dysentery first became apparent, some of the men being too weak to stand.

Late in the afternoon a strange procession was seen advancing up the valley towards us—a dozen mules, each with two water-skins! But, alas! the water was not for us. It was for the troops who had been fighting on our front. Poor devils! they needed it. We could guess something of their need by the condition of the half-mad creatures who came back out of the action. I heard afterwards that some had died of that need. Anyhow, we were allowed four biscuit-tins nearly half-full of water for the company.

With the approach of night the battle ended, and we were told to climb the hill once more and go back to the battalion, where we had left it the previous evening on a crest of the ridge, reporting at Brigade Headquarters on the way.

So we set off once more, in single file, up the steep, winding path in the dark, and came at length to Headquarters. There we were told that the battalion was in a farther advanced position along the ridge, and that we were to go out to their left to carry down the line as far as the sea. Meanwhile, we could have some water if we left a party behind with the water-bottles. By some misfortune, it fell to the lot of my platoon to stay for the water, while the rest of the company filed off into the dark.

Bullets from snipers kept us lying down, and the process of filling the two hundred odd water-bottles was a slow one. Apparently, though in the dark it was not possible to be sure, mules had brought up the water from the beach in skins, and these had been emptied into tanks. After a while the bottles were all filled and off we went. But, unfortunately, in the hurry and confusion of the darkness, many of the corks had been mislaid and many water-bottles unavoidably changed by the official fillers at Headquarters; some were even lost, taken away by some straggler's eager hand that found its way there in the blackness of the night. Bullets, fatigue, and dysentery are apt to make men careless of trifles.

Our progress to the place rather vaguely appointed was

very slow and difficult. It is hard to calculate distances in complete darkness over uneven ground.

The little path, near the crest, was too dangerous to use, owing to snipers, who, lying concealed by day, with stores of food and ammunition, among the thick bushes and boulders in the wilderness between the hill-top and the sea, crept out at night to watch for a shot against the sky-line.

Now and then, as we went farther on, a sentry would challenge us, or, nearer the front, have a bad shot at us. But they never seemed to know where our battalion was. At length, however, after several hours of scrambling, we ran into a man who had been sent us by the company to lead us in, and who eventually helped us to find it. By good luck we all arrived without any bones broken by our tumbles among the boulders, and as there was no room for the platoon in the line the company was holding, we posted a sentry, collected the water-bottles, and, getting into a little hollow, went to sleep.

(To be continued.)

Concerning Secret Agents

By Major Stuart-Stephens

One day on her way into town a twentieth-century lass of Richmond Hill picked up from the seat of an empty first-class carriage a copy of the *Matrimonial Reverberator.*

It appeared from a perusal of its columns that a vast number of ladies and gentlemen, of the highest social distinction and the most eminent degrees of celebrity in art, letters, and science, were desperately anxious to make each other's acquaintance with a view to the enjoyment of what in the spacious Victorian age was frequently written of as Connubial Bliss! Arrived at Waterloo, she chartered a taxi, and was set down in Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, where, in a dingy back office, after a considerable wait, Miss "Jacky" Jackson, furiously blushing, found herself confronted by my venerable friend, the late Mr. Leslie Frazer Duncan, husband of Whyte-Melville's widow, and controller of the destinies of that once-renowned organ, the *Matrimonial Reverberator.* "I have got the very man for you, the Count Lionel du Blague de Bavard," the High Priest of Hymen announced, after he had gathered from the maiden that the one wish of her heart was utterly to rout the pretensions of certain of her preposterously exclusive neighbours on "the Hill" by becoming a real live lady of title. Some weeks after—the editor of the *M.R.* intervening—a fortuitous introduction had been brought about between the Jackson *ménage* and a distinguished foreign visitor to the British Isles, the family solicitor suggested to Miss "Jacky's" papa the advisability of instituting some discreet inquiries into the Count's antecedents before bestowing upon him the eminent coal merchant's one ewe lamb and her substantial portion. Picking up a morning paper the solicitor placed a finger upon an advertisement in the last column of its back page.

From it one learned that Moritz Moses, private inquiry agent, directed from an address in Poppy Street, Strand, a vast organisation of international agents, and that, notwithstanding that this gifted person had been employed to unravel mysteries by most of the Chancelleries of Europe, his fees would be found to be surprisingly moderate.

The very next day conceive a portly, middle-aged gentleman, as he ascended this centre of cosmopolitan espionage, glancing timorously over the dusty bannisters to see if any of the relations of "Jacky's" girl friends had followed him; for he knew them to be, as he coarsely phrased it, "a nosing set of busybodies," all bitterly jealous of the occupants of Number so-and-so Downe Terrace, Richmond-on-Thames, by reason of the frequent visits of that amiable youthful member of the ancient *noblesse*, M. le Comte du Blague de Bavard. Accorded audience after an impressive delay, his new client explained to the private inquiry agent that his motive for being so inquisitive was that, being a strict member of the old Roman faith, he was determined never to deliver his daughter into the arms of a husband, however high his rank, unless he was of an edifying life and goodly conversation.

Mr. Moses (a Scotchman) appreciated so touching a paternal sentiment, and straightway relieved the Christian father of a cheque for fifty pounds on account, explaining that investigations of this nature were always delicate, and by consequence not seldom tremendously expensive. "But," quoth the master of sleuth-hounds, "I may presume, Sir, that the young lady will take some money with her when she marries with your approval?" "Yes, you may presume that if all is right and above board my girl will have a fortune of £25,000. You see, Mr. Moses, she is my only child." "The more reason," responded the Mouchard with a benevolent air, "why I should exert every effort to prevent such a handsome dowry falling into the hands of a 'spendthrift.'" Actuated by this laudable purpose the cunning disciple of the late Howard Vincent, sometime Director of the C.I.D., when his client has departed, whistles up one of his pack and instructs him to find out all he can about "a Frenchman—name of Blague or Bavard, who calls himself a Count, and who, it's a

million to one, is a fair wrong 'un." Following up which gross scandal this stern censor of moral rectitude tosses across the table a couple of sovereigns. Armed with these a seedy-looking individual slinks down the back staircase of Number 2*a* Hanover Street, the house of an ex-valet of a sometime Royal Commander-in-Chief of Queen Victoria's Army. "By ways that were dark" the slinker persuaded an under-housemaid to give him a list of the Count's tradespeople. Our pilgrim found all these worthy citizens in a highly communicative mood. Scenting, as each of them did, the object of the spy's mission, not a word was permitted to escape as to their sincere desire that a forthcoming wealthy marriage would solve the problem of the Count's indebtedness.

The shades of night, falling fast, were being dispelled by the lights of the Café Verrey, when the slinker might have been discovered again on a staircase round the corner, this time on the way to the first floor. "Yes, the Count had just come in to dress for dinner, and not a moment to spare," intimated the landlord, who was inserting studs in his noble lodger's dress-shirt. This being so, Moses's emissary went at once to the point: "I have been instructed to make a few confidential inquiries about you, Monsieur le Comte, and have received such a meritorious account of your lofty character and your substantial financial position that I am almost afraid to hand it to my employer, who is one of the most suspicious people I ever met."

"Oh, my good man," laughed the Count, extracting from a crocodile-hide note-case a deliciously crisp, brand-new Bank of England fiver, "I can guess who you have come from. If Mistare Jackson was one of your English lords he—what you call it?—smell a rat if I, a French noble, was described to him as a *devotée*. But with this *bourgeois* merchant of coals—put that banknote in your pocket—it is possible to dissimulate. So you will please report that I go to High Mass at the Italian Chapel in Hatton Garden every Sunday, and to Confession at Farm Street on the last Saturday of the month."

"He goes to Confession once a month," echoed the slinker, a pious glow illuminating his sallow face.

"That's it. And that I at least once a week devote the evening, and sometimes far into the night, into seeking out

the destitute of my compatriots in Soho, who are often hungry and invariably thirsty. In short, in doing good works," explained the Count, with an eye as eloquent as half-a-dozen by-elections.

"To doing good works," repeated the slinker with an air of true religious enthusiasm.

The following morning the astute Moses was put in possession of all these comforting details of the young French nobleman's life in London, and at the same time was petitioned for three pounds ten, the exact sum which it was alleged his employee had late at night to borrow from a friend to aid him in probing into the inner life of Number 2*a* Hanover Street's distinguished lodger.

As these private detective bureaus are necessarily conducted on the principle of absolute confidence, as existing between master and man, the private inquiry agent chucked another half-sovereign to the slinker, coupled with the cheering recommendation that he might go back to Hanover Street and see if he "couldn't squeeze the other three 'thick 'uns' out of his new pal, the Count.

Just two weeks after these instructive incidents—for no self-respecting private inquiry agent could think of making his office so cheap as to, in inquiries of this nature, send on a report by return of post—a prosperous resident on Richmond Hill was the recipient of a formidable-looking linen envelope which contained a *dossier*, one that read somewhat like the life of a late and sainted Earl of Shaftesbury. And enclosed with this gratifying certificate of good character was a letter stating that the peculiar nature of the inquiry had led to the dispatch of a special agent to Monte Carlo (against which impregnable rock the Count had the last winter laid unsuccessful siege), and the keeping of several others trudging about Paris and London for many days. The bill, deducting £50 received on account, amounted to exactly £319 2*s*. 9*d*., for which Mr. Moses would be glad to receive a cheque. As it is always expedient to discharge private detective offices' bills with that celerity which one displays in getting rid of any noxious thing, Mr. Moritz Moses had not long to wait for his hard money, nor had M. le Comte for the handling of Mme. la Comtesse's substantial dot.

So all concerned were made duly happy, at least for a time.

Some couple of years after the engineering of this international alliance I fell into an after-dinner conversation with an Ambassador of the nation of France and erstwhile Premier of the Third Republic, who had—surprising combination—as an old "Blue," helped to row his boat to victory over the 'Varsity course. Our discourse lightly turning to the vexed subject of Anglo-French marriages, the writer was pained to learn that the Count du Blague de Bavard was unfortunately not a Count at all. He was, His Excellency informed me, the only child of a confectioner of repute, in the Rue Volney, who left behind him one and eighty thousand francs. Now, the Civil Registers having been conveniently burned during the Commune, our ingenious youth conceived the brilliant idea of converting himself into a blue-blooded aristocrat. In this instance it might be conceded that some shadow of justification existed for this audacious act of self-promotion.

As sons of *la Grand Nation*, all Frenchmen are great and equal. And when all is said and done, what is the use of being a citizen of a Republic if a confectioner is not as good as a Count? Anyway, according to M. Waddington's interesting revelation, it would appear that young Blague, the tart manufacturer's heir, paid a visit to the Hôtel de Ville a few years before he transferred his energies to Perfidious Albion.

He was accompanied to the centre of Parisian municipal life by a brace of witnesses who were not overburdened with an attachment to the naked truth, and with charming *sangfroid* filled in a statutory declaration that he was Blague de Bavard and a Count. Whereupon this monstrous fiction was duly inscribed upon stamped paper, because there was no one to dispute its accuracy. In due time this terrible story got out in Richmond—it still exists as a legend among the elder residents—and the sometime Miss "Jacky," shortly after this untoward revelation, found it desirable to remove herself and her "Count" of extremely scant account to the Sister Isle, where this exalted pair consorts with alleged descendants of Hibernian kings. Madame la Comtesse is the mother of three—two boys—of course, styled in Kerry "the young Counts."

And so, Mr. Moses being translated to another sphere, I now give forth this story untrammelled by the laws of libel, *verb. sap.*

From private detectives to the Secret Service of the British Government is a far step. Well, what of it? If one listened to that erudite novelist, Mr. William le Queux, or his rival in the literature of the *haute politique*, Mr. Phillips Oppenheim, one might conceive the Secret Service agent to be a person who haunted the Foreign Office at strange hours—rushing in with muffled face, or, if a lady, with thick veil down and heart throbbing for fear of being seen.

The Permanent Under-Secretaries at the Foreign Office, or the Admiralty, or War, or Home Offices, whose province it is to deal with the high-class "unofficially employed" agent, are never so tactless as to expose their trusted instruments to these inconveniences.

And as to those unlucky people who are suspected and avoided socially as if they were lepers, it may safely be stated that they could not obtain employment in Secret Service if they offered their ears for it. For, like Cæsar's wife, the Government agent must be above suspicion.

Now and again, at very long intervals, authentic news concerning Government Secret Service finds its way into the public Press. Sir Edward Jenkinson, K.C.B., lent from the Indian Secret and Political Department to the Irish Government for the suppression of assassination and dynamite conspiracies, quarrelled with his nominal chief, Mr. H. Matthews, Q.C., the then Home Secretary, and following the official rupture an unprecedented disclosure of the working of Irish Secret Service appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette* from the hand of my old friend, the late W. T. Stead.

Another admission of the existence of our Secret Service exists in print in which the relater tells the story of how he came to be employed as a secret agent by the Foreign Office. Quoth the late Sir Joseph Crowe, K.C.M.G.: "Bernal Osborne, who had never relaxed in his friendly efforts in my interest, asked me in the Reform Club one evening what my prospects were. I candidly confessed that I should not be able to

hold out in London. 'Now,' said he, 'sit down and write at once and offer your services to the Foreign Office,' and as he spoke he laid hold of my arm, forced me down to a writing-table, and dictated a letter to Lord John Russell, stating what I had done as a correspondent for the *Times* in the Crimea, India, and Italy, concluding with a request to be employed in any capacity that his lordship might think fit. A couple of weeks passed, and on the evening of September 15th the Government Whip, Lord Marcus Hill, slipped into my hand at the Reform a letter in an ordinary envelope from Mr. Hammond, the Permanent Under-Secretary of the Foreign Office, informing me that Lord John Russell was willing to employ me for a time in visiting different parts of Germany under instructions which would be communicated to me *verbally*. My allowance while thus confidentially employed would be the usual rate of thirty shillings a day, plus the usual expenses of travelling."

Let me endeavour to picture a typical incident in the Secret Service agent's life.

Watch that little electric brougham which has just pulled up outside the main entrance of the Catholic Cathedral at the back of Victoria Street.

A *distingué*-looking woman on the border of the thirties steps out holding a missal in her hand.

The lady's coachman wheels round and takes his stand opposite, waiting until Mass is over. But if you follow her you will see her glance round, skirt one of the aisles as if looking for a seat, and when she had reached the next door slip through it, hail the first taxi-cab and drive to a block of flats away down Victoria Street.

She quickly ascends in the lift and rings at a door with a professional plate on it—a plate with the name of an American dentist on it, an individual, in fine, liable to frequent visitors.

She is not delayed in the outer room, and a gentleman, whose forehead bears the tell-tale streak of a forage cap, comes forward to greet her. "I have important news that I could not trust to the post," she says, after the usual compliments, for Government employers of secret agents always treat their instruments with a politeness most soothing. "I was at the Bal Poudré the night before last, given by the wife of the Chief of the Grosser General Stab,

and I have reason to infer from what one of my partners dropped that his turn comes next week to go through a course of instruction in the mechanism of the automatic rifle that is being secretly manufactured in Magdeburg. As my informant is an Ordnance officer, belonging to the 9th Army Corps, it is reasonable to believe that the other eight Corps have already completed their re-armament, despite the denials of the unofficial organs of the Ministry of War.

Her polite interlocutor draws a notebook and jots down things while the lady strokes the velvet cover of her Prayer-book as demurely as if it were a cat.

"You see I have been active," she winds up after a long conversation, "but I have not done yet, for I must warn you of the Berlin correspondent of a syndicate of Colonial papers who rent a handsome flat in the Kaiserin Augusta Strasse, where a good deal of bridge is played, and his guests, I have reason to know, are nearly always officers of the Artillery of the Guard.

"The odd thing about him is that I have discovered that every few months he pays a flying visit to London, and that when he returns to Berlin he discharges a sheaf of bills. It is just possible he is a travelling agent for the German espionage service."

"We will see to him," replies the urbane "dentist," "and now, I suppose——" but the question is conveyed rather by gesture than word, for he produces £110 worth of German notes, which the lady eyes with affection, remarking innocently: "Yes, the month will be up on Thursday next week; I think I may as well take it to-day, and I see you have allowed me £10 expenses back and forward"; and she is escorted with infinite respect to a door opposite to that which she entered by and which gives exit to Rochester Row.

A few days later the man-servant introduces a male visitor—alert, dressed in the manner of Savile Row, with moustache well waxed and hands well gloved, the type of a dashing, prosperous military journalist. "How de do, Scribble?" says the "dentist," extending his hand to the latest arrival from the banks of the Spree. "I have plenty of news," says the newspaper man breezily. "In the first place, I have learnt beyond the shadow of a doubt that the change of small arms will not take place until May next

year; and the night before last a drunken guest of mine let out that they don't look for war until the serving-out of the new rifle is completed. At the rate the re-armament is progressing, that would mean about sixteen months ahead, And, oh! by the by, while I think of it, I must caution you against an Irish woman, an intriguer and Fenian in silk, who is married to a Russian Baron who is as poor as a church mouse. I have discovered that she is every now and then over in town, and that she always returns, the wife of one of my friends informs me, with a couple of new frocks.

"Her little fortune was spent long ago; so I ask: 'Where does the money come from?'"

"I have never seen her," says the "dentist" with interest, "but I'll take care she is watched." From which it will be seen in Government Secret Service that A never knows who B is.

Now, there are Government confidential agents who are as respectable as the nature of their calling will permit, and there are confidential agents who are precisely the reverse, which also the nature of their calling will permit.

I have my eye on one of these last whose flight in ante-war times over several of the European capitals has been as crooked as that of a crow with one wing, and who lately, borne on the rude blast of war, has alighted on the top of one of the high houses in Government Street, into which, after shaking his dusky plumage, he obtained entrance by a conveniently open window.

And yet there is even, despite the blockade of Germany, the *Allgemeiner Polizei-Anzieger* always to be consulted, a mysterious paper that circulates among the police of the world, in which are Who's Who notices of scamps wanted, and scamps secured and disposed of, and in many cases their photographs, and in all their personal marks and peculiarities. Among them are, sure enough, the alleged descendant of a Hibernian king, and in the *Allgemeiner Polizei-Anzeiger* many reasons why this sable bird should be driven from his very last homing-place. Cast your eye for one moment over his *dossier* and see if it is not so.

Ignatius O'Mulligan, *alias* Francis O'Flagherty (this, of course, is not his real patronymic), with an Irish birth-

certificate, a linguist, a writer, a gifted young gentleman, aged 30, height 5½. Here follow personal marks and peculiarities. Filius Nullius, he was born in Roscommon, and he was expelled from St. Jailawth's College in Tuam, came to this country with a "programme," like the illustrious Dr. Graves, but got in with an official who introduced him to ——, and so on; he has been in and out of trouble as often as the meteorological figure of the man is in and out of his house, which, as all know, is as often as the weather changes. And now? Now he is an important man.

What Italy is Doing

By Julius M. Price

War-Artist Correspondent of the "Illustrated London News" with the Italian Army.

When, in May last, Italy threw in her lot with the Allies it was immediately fondly imagined by many unthinking people in England that this would bring about, if not exactly a speedy termination to the war, at least a complete change in the general aspect of affairs. It was reasoned by the stay-at-home club-armchair military critics that the addition of Italy's army and navy would inevitably, by mere numerical conclusions, turn the scales in favour of the Entente. At the first blush there may possibly have appeared a certain justification for such reasoning—and was, moreover, in a certain measure borne out by the early dramatic successes when the Italian troops practically swept everything before them in their wild triumphant march across the frontier, and when they retook possession of the former provinces of Italy.

To the more serious observer, however, these initial operations must, to a very great extent, have recalled the impetuous progress of the French in Alsace in August, 1914, when General d'Amade announced, after three weeks' operations, that not a single enemy remained on French soil. Successful though it was, it proved, as has been seen, but the veriest *étalage*, and a mere prelude to what was going to happen, once the opposing armies "got into their stride," and which, beyond the effect it produced on the *moral* of the troops, achieved no useful military purpose. That Italy, except by the most phenomenal luck, was going to have a walk-over to her first objective, Trieste, was in the very last degree improbable; and in spite of all the enthusiasm aroused by the capture of Cormons and the advance into Austrian-Trieste, it was soon realised by all thinking Italians that this was but a *lever de rideau*, of

good augury, perhaps, but that the real drama had not yet commenced.

But in war it will not do to follow too closely the simile of the stage, where a really successful play must progress from situation to situation to a triumphant conclusion. On the Italian side of the war everything points to a successful issue; but the days of *coups de théâtre* are past, they have been succeeded by the ding-dong of apparently monotonous military operations that are very exasperating to those impatient experts who do not comprehend the reason for all the comparative inactivity of the past four months.

I went out with very little acquaintance of the Italian army or its high command, but I spent several months in Italy, at the front, so am in a position to be able to give my personal conclusions of what I saw and what I learned. And I will say I was most favourably impressed from the start.

The exceptional severity of the winter has necessarily impeded all operations on a big scale, especially in the mountain regions. Italy has admittedly the finest mountain troops in the world, but unbounded pluck and enthusiasm avail as nothing against the relentless forces of Nature. So the past few months have been practically lost in so far as any important spectacular result is concerned. The early gains have been consolidated, and in some instances, as, for instance, on the Col di Lana and at Rovoretto, substantial progress made. Occasional "affairs of outposts" and the "artificial avalanches" produced by artillery fire that one has read of cannot be seriously considered as entering into the programme of the campaign, interesting though they may be as proving that all is not exactly in a state of coma even in these snow-clad fastnesses.

Neither sketches nor photographs can convey anything but the faintest idea of the enormous difficulties Italy is up against. The Austrians had the advantage of position everywhere. One must have seen for oneself the Italian artillery with huge guns mounted on the very summits of mountains 10,000 feet high—to ascend which, under ordinary circumstances, is no easy task—the endless lines of entrenchments and wire entanglements stretching the entire length of the frontier—to be able to form any conception

of what this mountain warfare really means. I visited every part of the front in the autumn and was amazed at the skill and daring displayed on all sides. What it must have meant passing the winter in the veritable Arctic conditions that prevail in these regions can be imagined, and when one learns that in spite of all the Italian troops have still advanced, one cannot fail to be filled with admiration. It is only Youth with its irrepressible ardour and enthusiasm that could have stood such a test of endurance all these months.

The same may be said of the position on the Isonzo, where tropical rains and the impassable condition of the country have held up everything for many weary weeks. The bombardment of the Podgorra ridge has been continued with almost chronometrical monotony, week in and week out, until one almost begins to wonder if there can be anything left of this much-talked-of hillside, and the same applies to the Goritzia bridge-head. But that there is method in this incessant pounding is certain, wasteful and purposeless as it may appear to the layman.

I remember on one occasion when I was visiting Gradisca the Italian batteries were firing on the Austrian positions with a regularity that brought forcibly home that impression of clockwork. From an observation post one could plainly see the shells bursting on an apparently deserted hilltop a couple of thousand yards away, and practically on the same spot all the time, for the shooting was excellent. The *raison d'être* of this continuous bombardment without any visible result—for there was no reply from the Austrian batteries—prompted my asking the reason for it, and what, if the hill was abandoned, was the use of shelling it at all; I could have understood sweeping the position from end to end with projectiles, but not sticking to one particular spot. The reply was: "It is all part of a general plan, and the artillery commander has to carry out his instructions."

It is this monotonous state of affairs that has had perforce to be kept up all through the winter and has ended in a sort of temporary stalemate—where anything in the nature of a successful move forward can at the very utmost be only reckoned by yards.

The conditions along the Isonzo sector are practically

the antithesis of those prevailing in the mountainous regions of the Cadorre, Carnia, and the Trentino; here low foot-hill and plain present opportunities for operations which remind one of those being carried on in Flanders—armoured trenches, of course, playing the principal part everywhere.

Every attempt, therefore, by General Cadorna at a forward move in this direction must be backed up as it were by defensive as well as offensive precautions, with the result that the entire front of this region presents a series of lines of entrenchment and barbed-wire entanglement that are designed to afford an immediate protection should the advance fail and a retirement prove necessary.

The Subida lines in particular struck me as being a veritable masterpiece of military engineering work; they would shelter several army corps at a pinch, though fortunately there has not been the slightest fear so far of their being requisitioned, and all the time and expense laid out on them will, it is to be hoped, have been but precautionary measures.

In years to come these miles of covered-in, armoured trenches, with their endless protective wire entanglements, will doubtless prove of intense interest to the military student, and though they may not present the picturesque aspect of a Vauban fortification, they are certainly none the less impressive. It is certain they will long remain as evidence of the determination and method with which Italy took her part in the great war.

All this, though only as it were a big side issue, served further to convince me that Italy is carrying on her part in the operations in a thoroughly well-considered and serious manner that must have a very cogent bearing on the ultimate result.

The plan of campaign of General Cadorna was, without a doubt, to make as big a dash forward as possible at the start in order to hold up the Austrians at points of his own choosing, and that he has succeeded in this there can be no question. Moreover, it is certain that the Austrians themselves realise it.

Confronted as he was everywhere by a numerically superior enemy having all the topographical advantages of the entire frontier, Cadorna has achieved the important result of forcing a large proportion of the Austrian army

to remain not only on the defensive, but on the alert all along the front for over six months. There is no gainsaying this, everything proves it.

It was only the wonderful state of preparedness of Italy that could have enabled her to accomplish such a remarkable result. Of course, however, it must not be overlooked that she had had ample time to prepare and to make, as it were, an exhaustive study of the German and Austrian methods; but one is tempted, nevertheless, to conjecture what would have happened if she had been less ready on that fateful day in May last when she declared war on Austria. The state of affairs on the Russian front would have been very different from what it is to-day had the Austrian army succeeded in getting through Italy's wall of steel.

It is this indisputable fact that is not taken into consideration when amateur critics in England, without any more intimate knowledge of what is going on than they can gather from the scanty official *communiqués*, start repining on the slowness of Italy and asking what she is doing. General Cadorna has his hands full, and if he can only hold his own in the important positions he now occupies, he will have in no small measure contributed to the ultimate aggregate success of the allied operations.

Any idea of a sensational advance on Trieste and towards Vienna must for the present be dismissed as purely fantastic. I will admit that after the brilliant capture of Monte Nero and the quasi-triumphant entrance of the Italian troops into Cormons, I had visions of a speedy materialisation of my hope of an early visit to the Austrian capital—it did not take me long, however, to realise that many a month was likely to pass before, if ever, I reached Vienna in the wake of a victorious army. There appears now to be no likelihood in the immediate future, either in this or any other sector, of any dramatic *coup*.

What the next few months may bring forth comes within the sphere of prognostication into which I have no desire to attempt to trespass. Prophesying is at its best a thankless task, as it appears that the unexpected is what is most likely to occur—in this war as in all others.

In the meantime one thing is certain: the Italian army is not in any sense of the term "marking time" on any

portion of its 400-mile front. It is, of course, impossible to state the strength of the army Italy has at present in the field, but it is perhaps significant of impending operations on a larger scale that further classes have been recently called up, though this step may have been deemed necessary by the then increasing gravity of the situation in the Balkans.

In Italy public opinion, although enthusiastic for the war, was from the onset strongly against any over-sea adventure —rightly, perhaps, arguing that General Cadorna had no more men than were absolutely necessary to safeguard the home front and provide for reserves and unavoidable wastage, apart from the units required for the lines of communication. It has even been argued that in this respect there is not sufficient margin to guard against contingencies. Half a million has been given by some authorities as the number of men at present available for reserves, and this, it will be admitted, if reliable, does not permit of any untoward risks being incurred.

The fact, though, must not be lost sight of that when the plans for the campaign were originally decided upon, the Balkan crisis had not arisen, so unless the Italian Government was gifted with superhuman prescience the present situation could not possibly have been foreseen and prepared for. That, however, the Government is fully alive to the grave potentialities that have supervened is evident not only by the recent speeches of Signor Barzilai and other Ministers, but by the decision to send a division without delay to reinforce the garrison at Vallona, which looks like becoming a position of great importance and a considerable factor in the events of the near future.

The painful impression caused by the loss of the Boccha di Cattaro, following on the putting out of action of Montenegro, has already been overshadowed by the significant trend of affairs in Southern Albania, and the Press, almost without exception, is convinced that if Italy is to hold her own on the Adriatic there must be no sign of weakness at this point.

For the moment, however, the terrific onslaught of the Germans on the French front at Verdun tends naturally to draw attention from the situation in the Balkans; but that the activities of the Central Powers will again shift

to this quarter, and with renewed energy, appears as certain as anything can be certain where the object of all the thrusts hitherto made has been shrouded in mystery.

In my opinion, Vallona is destined to assume an importance equal to that of Salonika; and Italy, unless strongly assisted by the Allies, will find she has need of every effort on her part if she is to retain her hold on it. Whether one division is sufficient to relieve any anxiety as to its safety remains to be seen.

There has been, to my mind, a disquieting absence of news from this quarter recently, and it must not be overlooked that no news is not necessarily good news. The Austrians are, and always have been, extremely alive to the strategic importance of the magnificent natural harbour of Vallona, which practically commands the Straits of Otranto and therefore the entrance to the Adriatic, and which is, moreover, only forty miles distant from Corfu.

It is said there is no finer submarine base anywhere in the Mediterranean; so the import of it at the present juncture can scarcely be over-rated, the more especially when it is remembered that the Italian fleet is fully occupied in guarding her long and exposed coast-line on the Adriatic and the route of communication with Albania.

It will be gathered, therefore, that at the present moment Italy has her hands full, and everything points to her becoming still more involved in the vortex of the Armageddon rather than the contrary. What she is doing, however, on her own frontier up to the present, with the exception that I have pointed out of the initial stage of the war, has been necessarily of a somewhat unobtrusive character, and is likely to continue so until the spring is well advanced and more active operations are again possible.

Meanwhile, for reasons best known to the Generalissimo, little or no news is allowed to filter through from the Front, and no correspondents are permitted for the present to return to the war zone. A veil of secrecy has therefore been drawn over the operations for some time past, so it is, perhaps, not to wondered at that the question is continually being asked: "What is Italy doing?"

Women and War Economy

By Mrs. Alec-Tweedie

MEN are everlastingly preaching economy, and women are unceasingly practising it.

Let us take a peep at the topsy-turvy muddle it all is.

First. The Kitchen.—Thousands of women are trying to be careful. Porridge for breakfast has taken the place of eggs at *2d.* or *3d.* each and bacon at *1s. 6d.* a pound. Less meat and more rice and macaroni, dumplings and vegetables are eaten. The *casserole* pot is everywhere with its succulent joy. Butter in the dining-room has been substitued by margarine. Coke ekes out the coal. Simple washing is done at home. Smart frocks are taboo. Hats are trimmed up from bits or odds and ends; in fact, the woman is economising all round, except on servants' wages, and many servants don't yet seem to know there is a war at all.

Second.—Men talk a lot about economy; but where are they economising? Judges, politicians, and civil servants are all apparently taking much the same incomes as usual. They still drive about in their motors. The artisan is drinking almost as much stimulant as ever, and it is murmured that the bar of the House of Commons is still open. Men are cooking at, and supervising, camps on most extravagant and wasteful lines. The Government is building huts and hospitals at vast expense where old buildings might be utilised at half the cost. Where, oh, where are men economising?

After one year and nine months of war the Government is still haggling over many little things which women could settle in one hour and nine minutes!

Speaking roughly, one might say:

The vast majority of women would have general conscription.

Women would enrol every woman as a worker of some sort.

Women would have bread tickets, and meat tickets, and control the markets.

Women would pay wages half in cash and half in War Loan, from the highest to the lowest in the land.

Women would intern every alien and make him pay or work for his maintenance and to help the State. They would employ every naturalised German to help in some way, and not leave them free to make money while our own men are on service.

Women would employ every German prisoner, so that he should be no expense to the State.

Women would stop strikes, which imperil the lives of our sailors and soldiers, by imprisonment of agitators and paid strike leaders, or shoot them, if by doing so they would save others from being shot on war service from want of coal or munitions.

Women would have an Air Minister to see that our air service beats all others, and sink politics during war. They feel this is not a time for party votes, but for Imperial unity, and its very life.

Women would put an absolute ban on all enemy goods, and put a high tariff on everything imported, except from our Allies or our own Dominions. They would tax amusements, and highly tax imported cinema films.

Women would plan right away our future procedure for business expansion for the employment of men and women after the war—and disabled soldiers, for education, etc., and would never again let able-bodied men go back to such light jobs as handling lifts, taking tickets, or simple clerkships, all of which disabled soldiers or women can do.

Women would draw up a list of all things of every kind that we can purchase from our Island, our Colonies, or our Allies—and another list of goods to be eschewed in every way, and they would rigorously abide by that list in their purchases of food, clothing, and such like. How are we to know if scissors or "ready-mades" have come from Germany if our Government does not protect us? How are we to know if the coffee is from our Colonies or Turkey if the Government lets our enemies send in their wares unchecked? Women would never stop the import of fruit (a most important article of food) from our Allies, but would insist on planting every available acre of land

with vegetables and grain. They might forbid the making of butter, and give the milk free to the babies whose mothers could not afford to buy it. We need babies—there are plenty of them—and we must not let them die from neglect.

Why not loan £25 or £100 without interest to ladies living in the country and let them attend classes on poultry and vegetable culture, or send them lucid Government pamphlets on these lines to study, so that England can be turned into one vast poultry run and market garden?

Women would gladly be farm hands; but farmers ungraciously refuse them as they can still get trained men. Result: deadlock.

Let us women demand to know what the country expects from us, and every woman in the country will, I believe, respond. We are tired of shilly-shallying.

Women would band themselves together to forget self-consideration, whole-heartedly working for the quick and successful termination of the war, *no matter at what sacrifice to ourselves*—but we would insist that men and women should be paid equally for equal work, and stand shoulder to shoulder. We would beg that fast rules for war economy and war helpfulness should be laid down, and that the Government should tell us what to do, and how to do it, or true economy will never be practised. The first thing this Government has to learn itself, *is to make up its own mind*, and once it has said a thing to stick to it. Up to now we have been told to "*carry on as usual*"—then to "*stop everything.*"

To "*spend fully*"—then to "*spend nothing.*"

To "*eat sugar*"—then to "*leave sugar alone.*"

"*To have conscription*"—then they have starred right and left and made as many *exceptions* as rules; in fact, they vacillate so often that we women are utterly at sea, longing to know what is really expected of us.

With the first cry of war we were told *women's work was not wanted, women's place was the home.* Eighteen months afterwards we women were implored to come forward and leave the homes for every class of work. Which was right? The first or the last? The suggestion came from men, and, of course, men never change their minds, so why the anomaly?

Why should Sunday posts not be stopped everywhere?

Why should all posts (delivered by men generally) not be stopped, excepting one delivery per diem? This would release endless post officials. Why should all pamphlets not be censored, and advertisements charged double? They encourage people to spend and not to save.

Why talk of a blockade and then fill it with holes like a wire sieve, so that important wares percolate through to our destruction? When women want food to last they put it on a plate, when they want it to drain they put it on the sieve.

The homes of Great Britain are run by the women. They hold the purse strings. Without cash, hard cash, we cannot win the war. Cash passes through the hands of the women, who, incidentally, generally have to account for every penny they spend to some man. Women must save, or, rather, lend to the country in her need.

Alas! there are exceptions at the present moment who do not seem to realise that it is bad taste to be dressed in the newest fashions. The best people are those who are wearing clothes of yester-year; that alone stamps them as people of heart and serious thought.

Germany can produce nearly everything she wants. We can't. We must buy from outside, and we must pay in cash—therefore, we must buy less, and lend our cash by buying War Loan with every shilling we can do without. *Thrift*, *economy*, *saving* must be no idle words till the war is over. Our best men are giving their lives; we must give our time and our cash. We must economise in expensive food; economise by not buying new clothes, or furniture, or motors; or by pandering to the craze for amusements; economise in servants and by closing part of our houses; economise by care and forethought at every turn. We would all have done it gladly in August, 1914, just as we would have welcomed conscription; but delay has hardened us, blunted the sharp edge of patriotism, and our Government has taught us to be callous, well-nigh indifferent.

A mistress may explain to a maid that her expenses have gone up and her income has gone down, with the net result that she must practically halve her expenditure. Since she cannot keep three servants any longer, the last to come must be the first to go. Moreover, since she does

not entertain any more, she hopes that by shutting the drawing-room and spare bedroom the two remaining domestics will be able to manage between them. Further, since food and washing and coal are so much more costly, she ventures to offer a slight reduction in wages. Result: all three walk off. Servants are not hit by the war; they expect the same wages and the same food, therefore, they really cost one-third, if not one-half, more in war time to the household expenses; yet the average maid does not expect to do a hand's turn more work. She does her war work by grumbling at her over-harassed mistress. Women with brains and education cannot organise and run charities, canteens, or hospitals if the cook neglects to give them their dinner. A nice little dainty-looking dinner served up to her hard-working, brain-fagged mistress is the cook's bit of war work, and is a real help to the country.

The servant-maid is chiefly obsessed with the fact that her married sister (whose husband has one of the over-paid jobs) has bought a piano which she cannot play, has invested in an American carpet—which are coming into this country in thousands—and is the proud possessor of a fur coat in which she goes shopping, little heeding that the mother of five children may be blown to pieces any moment in a munition factory, or the pretty lady's maid's skin may be turned bright yellow and her hair come out in lumps, while in many cases she is earning 20*s*. a week, and has to keep herself. The educated forewoman, who has trained at Woolwich and has great responsibility and terribly long hours, earns 30*s*. a week, and is told that is sufficient and she must be patriotic and not expect more. She is patriotic at the ruin of her health and strength. If she is killed at her job she deserves as honourable a funeral as any man in the field.

But let us turn the mirror again and congratulate both mistress and maid in some splendid cases of devotion to the employer, duty to country, and sacrifice of self, for there are cases where servants have gone *en bloc* to their employers and gratuitously offered to take half wages or none, do double work, and consider the exchequer in every way. All honour to them—those domestics are truly doing their bit, just as much or more as the woman at the factory.

When the doctors *do* agree, their unanimity is won-

derful. The experts have been putting their heads together, and they are solemnly and seriously convinced that economies should be vigorously effected in every household, on every outgoing, income, and luxury, and on any imports that do not happen to touch their own particular purse.

Paterfamilias stands on the hearthrug and makes the imposing announcement:—

"My dear, it is war time. We must economise." He does not condescend to details. He does not even reduce his own smoking. An airy wave of the hand and the conversation is closed.

The dutiful wife then puts on her thinking-cap again, nowadays a little frayed at the edge, and goes into ways and means for the hundredth time.

The rich have become poor. The poor have become rich. Among the first-named the enormous responsibilities of an expensive house, several servants, and children to be schooled hang like leaden weights round the necks of families. And the second class, accustomed to 25*s.* a week, are not able to spend £6 or £7 judiciously.

The one time rich have put their backs into it by giving their services freely, without pay, to the country. The elder ladies have washed and cooked and scrubbed in soldiers' canteens, the girls have done day and night work in hospitals as nurses or kitchen maids. The upper classes have behaved magnificently; of the others not one in a hundred appears to have saved a penny. Young women on separation allowances are buying silk petticoats. Alas and alack! all this means a grim future is in store for the working people of England. The educated classes have been taxed and have suffered. Now it is the turn to tax the masses who are earning under abnormal conditions. Doubtless, if the Government will arrange to accept half their own salary in War Loan, all the country will gladly follow suit. Amateur thrift is useless and unfair; let us all be taxed heavily, and let us all be taxed alike. Let democratic households buy War Loan and so provide for their future, instead of whining, when the war is over and they have wasted wickedly, that they have no work to do and must be helped and fed and kept.

The majority of women are anxious to be thrifty, but

our lords and masters who control the destinies of England must be good enough to tell us exactly what *is* economy.

Are we to buy raisins or currants, or are we not?

Are we to buy bananas and oranges, or are we not?

Are we to buy fresh fish or dried?

Are we to drink tea, or coffee, or hock, or burgundy, or what?

For Heaven's sake let them stop the import of all we ought *not* to buy, and import in *vast quantities* everything that will help us or our Colonies; but make it quite clear what helps and what hinders, and every woman in the land will do her bit.

Are furs prohibited?

Are we to run private cars or not?

Just say definitely, please, one way or the other. Cotton gloves—do they all come from Germany? Fancy shoes—do they still come from Austria? Leather purses and bags—are they still coming from Prussia?

This chaos is all the want of a strong hand and strong organisation. Organisation will win a war, just as organisation will make a business.

They say there are still 160,000 skilled women unemployed, and yet there are women who cannot find jobs, just as there are great engineers offering their services gratuitously whom no Government office will employ.

Why not let the women take a turn at organisation?

They have proved their capacity to the surprise of men, let them prove it still further by offering them a seat on every Board and every Committee, whether for economy, war, emigration, health, education, or sanitation.

In war women pay the toll. Women lose their husbands, sons, fathers, brothers, or sweethearts. Women have none of the excitement of action, or surprise, or of change; they sit and think, and think and wait. It is far harder to wait than to act. Women it is who give life, and through war live to see what has cost them so dearly thrown ruthlessly away.

Women did not make war any more than they made law, and yet in silence they must abide by both.

To them the last and greatest war economy of all—they must economise in tears.

War Charities Scandals

By M. H. Mason

The late Mr. Albert Pell was spending the winter at a certain seaside place on the south coast of England when, soon after his arrival, a woman who had hitherto made a comfortable living on the proceeds of begging from the residents called at his (rented) house on her usual rounds. Little did she know that she had walked straight into the jaws of the enemy. She had a pitiful and most moving tale of trouble, a large family to support, not imaginary, but real and really her own, and she took about with her for exhibition an unhappy baby with sore eyes, growing blind. This had so moved the hearts of the lazy emotional that she had no trouble in providing for herself by Charity (?), and no need to trouble about working. Mr. Albert Pell was often, and most unjustly, denounced as hard and illiberal, solely because he always refused to give to any person or object without full inquiry. But when he had satisfied himself that the person or object was really deserving, he gave with a generosity which no one suspected, because he never published his own good deeds. Neither did he publish the trouble and labour which his inquiries entailed. The case I now mention was never made public, unless in the local police reports, and I only happen to know about it because I was staying with him at the time. He took up the case with his usual care and thoroughness; and the result was that the woman was convicted of neglecting and ill-treating her children. She had already blinded one of them by putting acid into its eyes, and had thus succeeded in getting it into a blind asylum; and she was pursuing the same course with the unhappy baby.

I forget the exact sentence she received, but her children were rescued; and it cannot be denied that Mr. Pell, by giving his trouble, was their true friend rather than the people who gave their money to the mother without inquiry.

Individual impostors and bogus associations and agencies are always with us; but never have they had such

opportunities as those afforded by the present war. Emotion is more easily stirred than ever, and any tale of wounded, sick, suffering, or destitute is easily believed, because unhappily such cases abound in reality. Nothing is too bad to be believed because nothing can exceed the facts. Generosity, zeal, and anxiety to help have been stirred to such an extent that, as I am informed by most reliable authority, the amount which has been voluntarily subscribed in this country for war distress, since the war began, has exceeded a total of £20,000,000. It is all the more reason why help which is so sorely and widely needed should be given only to those for whom it is intended, and not diverted into the pockets of people out for personal profit. We are all giving all we can—let us see that we do not waste it, or, worse, encourage fraud.

But it is not only money which is given without inquiry or sense of responsibility. The careless manner in which persons of influence and high position sometimes give their names is absolutely astonishing. "What's in a name?" A touching appeal is received, say, by post, for an excellent object. The name of the great personage is asked for as patron or president. Why not give it? It is so little trouble, and apparently may do so much good. Just so: it may do so much good: but it may do still more harm. It gives a kind of guarantee and security for the person or association, and other names follow like sheep through a gap.

A name is a trust quite as much as any other kind of property or possession, and should be given and used with the same conscientiousness and care.

There are many ingenious ways of obtaining names. Mr. Smith may be honest and disinterested. But he may also be a regular adventurer, or the opportunities of the war may have inspired him to adventure for the first time. He may be at a low ebb financially, or wish to improve his position, or his business may be at a standstill owing to the war. Why, then, not devote his (enforced) leisure to benevolence and philanthropy? He thinks of an attractive title for his association, draws up a moving account of the sufferings it is to relieve, and writes to Lady A. asking for her name as a patron or vice-president. Lady A.'s feelings are moved by the appeal, and it does not even occur to her

to question its genuineness. She gives her name without hesitation, and Mr. Smith is then able to quote her to Lady B., who gives hers because she sees that of Lady A. Then Mr. Smith quotes them both to Lady C., who gladly gives her name and countenance to so estimable an object backed by ladies who are her own friends or acquaintances, and so the snowball rolls on, an influential list is secured, and there may be no limits to Mr. Smith's success, the heights to which he may aspire, or the amount of funds he may secure. Royal patronage may even be his reward.

But if this simple start does not succeed at first, or if Mr. Smith has not sufficient confidence in it, there are various other and more ingenious methods. He may begin by writing to Lady A. and Lady B. by the same post, telling each that the other has given her name as patron or president. These ladies are kind-hearted and very busy; they cannot spare the time to make inquiries; they take his statement on trust, and each gives him her name without asking the other if she has really done so. Now he is well started and can fly higher. He is able to write and ask Lady C. for her name, stating quite truthfully and safely that Ladies A. and B. have given theirs. Lady C., trusting in her turn, follows the others quite confidently without inquiry, and so the list of patrons mounts up and the results already described are attained.

If Mr. Smith has selected foreign parts as the scene of his professed operations—and this is the most prudent course—he may call his enterprise, let us say, the Fund for the Relief of Ruritanian Orphans, and establish in its capital an agent who calls himself the branch or depôt for that Fund. To this agent he may send a consignment of goods or money. The agent may present it, in the name of the English Fund for the Relief of Ruritanian Orphans, to the Ruritanian authorities, who, as a matter of course and of civility, thank through him the Society of which they have never heard before. The agent can then convey these thanks (all the more valuable if given in writing) to his principal, who can then issue a printed appeal, in which the names and gratitude of the Ruritanian authorities stand in large type. Thus, under shelter of the Ruritanian names he can appeal to English persons of influence to give their names as patrons or presidents.

He may write, first, to the Earl of X., who may be, perhaps either too busy or too careless to perceive that the names of the Ruritanian authorities in large print are only those of persons who have thanked the Society for a gift, and he gives his name accordingly, possibly even supposing that he is giving it to the Ruritanian authorities.

Now the Earl of X. can be quoted to the Marquis of Y., whose name is thus obtained, and then both of them may be quoted to the Duke of Z. An impressive list of English patrons and presidents having thus been secured, the agent at the foreign capital may show it to the authorities there, ask for, and obtain, their patronage, and it may then be printed in England, where it secures further patronage and subscriptions. Back again now to Ruritania, where this time the list of great English names may easily secure the name and patronage of the Ruler of Ruritania.

The Society is now well launched and can organise a "Day" for the orphans of our Ruritanian friends, and there is scarcely a town or village where the authorities and the chief persons will not rush with enthusiasm into the scheme. Cockades, badges, or suchlike objects are sold in the streets and elsewhere, and Mr. Smith can instal agents of his own in suitable places, to collect for themselves and for him without fear of detection. His agents may be paid either in the form of wages or that of percentage on their takings, or there may be a division of receipts. It is quite likely that some of these friends or employees do not deliver up to him the whole of their takings, but there will be quite enough to make it worth his while, and I am not deep enough in his confidence to be able to state, or describe, the exact manner in which he and his friends divide the spoil.

Now, although I cannot say that I approve of "Flag" and suchlike "Days," or street collections generally, since they are open to great abuses, I do not for a moment suggest that they are all fraudulent or started in an improper manner. This description of Mr. Smith's "Day" is given only to show the heights to which he may arrive. And, however much we may be scandalised by his proceedings, the real person to blame is the great and otherwise good personage who has first given his or her name to the undertaking, and thus having carelessly set the ball rolling

is responsible for the whole thing. Next to him or her, the responsibility rests on the others, great and good, who have followed him, or rather taken his name for granted, sheep-like, without inquiry.

There is an old nursery game in which an interminable list of farmyard birds and animals spread the report that the skies are falling. Each inquires of the last who was his informant.

"Who told you, Turkey lurkey?"
"Goosey woosey told me."
"Who told you, Goosey woosey?"
"Ducky lucky told me";

and so forth, till Chickybiddy, the original author of the legend, is traced.

If similar simple inquiries were made from the great personages who give their patronage to charities or societies it would often be found that an exactly similar course had been followed, a similar chain would be discovered, and a somewhat similar result be obtained as to the origin of the scheme.

It seems hardly credible, but cases are not unknown where distinguished personages have withdrawn their names from an Association, and having received from its Secretary a remonstrance and request to reconsider the withdrawal, have replied by asking the Secretary himself whether any other patrons had withdrawn their names. Could they not have decided for themselves in this matter, and what answer could they expect from the Association?

It is too late to undo the harm by withdrawing the names afterwards. It may be, notwithstanding, still possible to go on using them for some time without discovery, or the withdrawal may not be seen by the whole of the subscribers or helpers. Neither can the reasons for withdrawal always be published.

The responsibility attaching to a great name is not a light one. The carelessness with which such names are frequently given is the very root of the evil. It would be interesting to know whether any blushes have been raised in the seats of the mighty by the warning issued to the public not long ago by the Chief Commissioner of Police, stating that in nearly all instances the promoters of funds have secured the patronage of influential persons, but that

such patronage is not necessarily equivalent to individual inquiry, and that the public should look to something more than the names of patrons before they give their support to funds; also that where the fund purports to be for the relief of distress abroad the public would be well advised to satisfy themselves, before subscribing, that it is approved by the Embassy or Legation of the country concerned.

When, therefore, appeals are received by persons in high places from Mr. Smith, asking for their patronage to, say, the Fund for the Relief of Ruritanian Orphans, it will be more prudent, as well as more conscientious, on their part not to accept without question Mr. Smith's own list of those said to be patrons already, but to inquire from themselves direct as to the circumstances under which they gave their names. And if that of the Ruler of Ruritania should be printed as president, it would be as well not to rely upon this, but to make inquiries personally at his Embassy or Legation in London.

It is no proof of the genuine character of an undertaking that it is known to distribute a certain, or even a large, amount of real help. Proceedings for personal profit are easily covered by a proper, but partial, allocation of the contributions. It is quite easy, say, to appropriate five or even more cheques or sums out of ten received, and to apply the rest to the professed objects.

The printing of the name of an auditor, or even the real appointment of one, is of little use. An auditor can only audit the material given to him. Who is to tell what is received by every post, or comes in personally and by hand? A receipt may be given, but the recipient of the receipt neither knows what is done with his particular gift nor how many other gifts have been received. I have myself received cheques and money for public objects, and if I had chosen to appropriate them nothing could have been easier. No one could possibly have found it out.

Even the printing of a statement of accounts with names of subscribers is no complete security, for it can scarcely be supposed that every subscriber takes the trouble of looking for his own name in every list. For these reasons, it is worse than useless to place a society or fund, which has been started in some such a manner as has been described, on a regular footing so long as Mr. Smith remains as

secretary, or in any other position of trust or responsibility. The only way is to get rid of him altogether.

In the case of clothing depôts, it is not difficult to sell at a low price a great deal of what is given. A store may be on view at the advertised depôt, but it will only be sold there if no one is likely to call and see what is going on: it may be removed and sold elsewhere. The same may be said of supplies of food, or any other kind of help; the contributors do not and cannot follow the conveyances or transport for its distribution.

Or a sale of work and other things may be held openly; but who is to say how the whole of the proceeds are applied?

There may be even worse than this. Police observation of an agency suspected of carrying on a White Slave or analogous traffic is ineffective if evidence sufficient for conviction is unobtainable; and such evidence is very difficult to obtain. Moreover, the ramification of agencies may be so intricate that, when turned out of their quarters, their friends can find them others.

The reason why I happen to have an exceptionally wide knowledge of the various undertakings for the relief of war distress is that I joined the National Food Fund when it was organised in the autumn of 1914 and placed on a regular footing. A committee of investigation was formed, of which I was one, to inquire into the working of all the institutions or undertakings which were already being supplied with food, and which might henceforth apply for it. I put my experience of twenty-five years' official inspection at the disposal of my colleagues, and visited and inspected all these places and persons and their work as far as time and strength allowed. An account of some of my experiences would be lively reading.

Since Scotland Yard has warned the public against subscribing to certain agencies professing to relieve certain kinds of war distress there has been a considerable demand for some kind of official register which shall enable the public to distinguish between genuine and other charities. There is now also a demand that the genuine shall receive an official licence or certificate from the Home Office or the Local Government Board.

The Chief Commissioner of Metropolitan Police has

taken a first and first-rate step towards the control of street collections, the system of begging most flagrantly open to abuse. Its dangers are so many, diverse, and great that it would be well if it could be prohibited altogether. However, the recent issue of the well-considered regulations would seem framed to meet all contingencies, as far as possible, in the area where they are in force. No society or agency is allowed to collect without a permit, and no individual without giving proof that he or she is authorised by a society which has such a permit. Other safeguards are provided as well. The constitution of the Advisory Committee is the best that could have been devised, inasmuch as it consists of members of the Charity Organisation Society, the Mendicity Society, and the Social Welfare Association for London, with one of the Assistant Commissioners of Police as its permanent chairman. It is thus unofficial, in the sense that it is not part of a Government department, nor controlled by such; it is independent, and formed of persons possessing the special knowledge and experience required. They will therefore be less likely than any others to be influenced by great names which may be supporting doubtful enterprises.

There may possibly be some difficulty in that persons falsely representing themselves as authorised by a society which has received a permit may impose on local policemen. There will also always remain the danger that the whole of the collectors may not hand in the whole of their takings to the proper quarter. The larger and wider the undertaking, the greater this danger.

At present the scheme of control is limited to an area which lies within a circle having a radius of six miles from Charing Cross. If the precedent is followed in the larger provincial towns or in counties, it will not be always easy to find so reliable and efficient an advisory committee as in London. Local persons are more subject to local influences, and in any case it will be very difficult to carry out prohibition, or even real control, in small towns and villages. Something, however, may and should be attempted universally, not only with regard to street collections, but "snowballs," one of the very worst forms of collecting or begging. It would be comparatively simple to prohibit both these methods altogether by legislation.

But street collections and snowballs, though the forms of collection most palpably open to abuse, are not the only methods. There still remain appeals, either personal or by letter or circular, by advertisements, entertainments, sales, and a thousand other means of raising money. Even if it were possible to set up a central authority, or register, it could not deal with or control local, small, or temporary undertakings. Local authorities would have to be established everywhere, and, as already said, if possessed of local knowledge, they are on the other hand also subject to local influences. It would also be difficult to draw a line between the larger and smaller charities, and the larger might form local branches under other names or guises. Least of all should any licences be given once for all. They would have to be renewable from time to time after surprise inspection; for a candidate for a licence may start in the most unimpeachable manner and, having obtained his licence, leave the straight path when he feels himself safe. It would, too, be difficult to deal with long-established charities of great repute, no matter by what means they were originally started or however doubtful their present proceedings, if not open to distinct proof. And the authority should not be required to give reasons for action. The onus of proof of fitness should rest with the applicant. It is to be hoped that this will always be the position with regard to the Advisory Committee for London street collections.

Those who really desire to know whether charities are genuine and reliable or not can usually find out from the Charity Organisation Society. It keeps just such a register as is now asked for, of at least the larger undertakings, and is always ready to give confidential information to proper inquiries. But the Society cannot be said to be popular. The fact is that a vast number of people not only dislike the trouble of making inquiry, but dislike those that take that trouble.

The whole question bristles with difficulties. Yet it is clear that something more should be done if possible to check the abuses to which charity, both real and otherwise, is open. The best solution would seem to be that the powers of the Metropolitan Police, which are at present limited to the matter of street collections, should be

extended to the control of all charity, and that they should be able, at their discretion, to inquire into, and to limit, regulate, or prohibit altogether any fund or collection in any form, and in any place within their area, and any advertisement for such purposes either in the newspapers or elsewhere; for such advertisements may be most mischievous. This power of control should be purely negative, and should not be accompanied by any authority to grant licences to societies or agencies, although the present police powers of permission for specified occasions or collections might remain.

If it should be thought advisable to extend the scheme to the country, like discretionary powers might be conferred upon the Chief Constable of each county, assisted by one central voluntary Advisory Committee. Difficult as it may be to find suitable members of such committees, able and willing to serve, it seems the only way and the best in the circumstances. No local Advisory Committees should be established.

As I have shown, it would be impossible for any authority to control or manage the whole of charity generally, and no authority should be made responsible for matters beyond its control. It would be sufficient to enable the authorities to deal at their discretion with fraudulent or doubtful cases without conferring upon any the official status of a licence. Those collectors or agencies which did not afford evidence of mismanagement or fraud, or which did not seem doubtful, did not overlap others, or were too small and private for official interference, might simply be left alone.

With regard to overlapping: when two charities for the same object were working in the same area, one might be closed, or stopped, without giving a licence to the other. The second might then either amalgamate with the first (a course which might perhaps be suggested by the authority if both were equally meritorious) or might devote its energies to some other and more needy cause, thus saving duplication of time, labour, machinery, and cost.

As an illustration. Supposing that two societies were already started for the relief of Ruritanian orphans, if one was above suspicion and the other not, the doubtful could be closed without giving a licence to the genuine. Or, if

both were equally satisfactory, priority might be given to that which was first in the field. Or, supposing that only one, and that genuine, were at work, the authority might prohibit the establishment of a second.

The Police authorities would scarcely be likely to interfere in an unjust or arbitrary manner; but if there were any fear as to their action, or if any question arose upon it, an appeal might possibly be allowed to the Home Secretary.

In any case, the Controlling Department should be the Home Office, not the Local Government Board, because :—

> The Local Government Board deals with relief of the destitute or poor, not with the administration of charity generally, nor with fraud, or misdemeanour.
>
> The Local Government Board have power only to inquire into the administration of such charities as come under their own control, or as apply to them for grants, and their sole means of control over the latter are the giving or withholding of such grants. They have no executive for enforcing their decisions. In case of resistance the final resort is the police; that is, the Home Office.

The Local Government Board have, at present, no power to inquire into the circumstances or working of independent agencies or institutions, still less into such as are open to suspicion of fraud or immorality. Neither have they a staff of experts qualified for investigations of this kind. Their inspectors are appointed for purposes altogether different, and have quite as much as they can do already. They are, in fact, distinctly understaffed in certain departments. If these additional duties were imposed upon the Local Government Board a fresh staff would have to be appointed, who would overlap the work which is already done by the police and detectives under the Home Office. The work of the Local Government Board has also been enormously increased since Public Health, County Council work, and other matters too numerous to mention have been thrown upon them in recent times, not to speak of the care of Belgians and other war work. It is not desirable to add to their burdens.

On the other hand; the Home Office is already provided with an expert staff in the form of the police and detectives, whose duty it is to inquire not only into fraud and immoral-

ity, but into anything which appears to be of a doubtful character, and who have executive power to act on their own investigations and information. They are already investigating the proceedings of war charities and other agencies, and regulating and controlling street collections. Their recent action in such matters has given general satisfaction, and has been endorsed on all sides. It seems, therefore, only reasonable to extend their powers for their present work, rather than to create a fresh and overlapping authority in the Local Government Board.

Legislation would be necessary to carry any such proposals into effect, and it might be as well to limit its force to the duration of the present war. If experience should prove its value it could be made permanent subsequently.

A further suggestion has been made that, in addition to this scheme, an earlier clearing-house might be instituted, by requiring, for instance, all charities appertaining to Red Cross work to filter through the Red Cross organisation; all Allies' charities to have first the imprimatur of the Ambassador or Minister of the country concerned; all prisoner-of-war charities to be approved by the War Office, and so on. It is suggested that charities working for identical causes would thus be co-ordinated, their numbers thereby reduced, and much overlapping of effort avoided.

But this could only be carried out by administration subsequent to legislation. It would be no more possible to effect it by legislation than to make licences compulsory. In fact, the scheme comes practically to the same thing. It would not be possible to prohibit all charities, great and small, permanent and temporary, central and local, from raising funds without such approval, and it would be impracticable to draw a line between them. As has already been said, it is not desirable to encourage Allies' charities which are not approved by the Embassies concerned, but it would be difficult to impose even this universally, or to draw a fixed legal line between them. Nor is the Red Cross organisation, the War Office, or any other Government Department any better fitted than the Local Government Board for the necessary investigations. Indeed, the War Office has already laid itself open to criticism with regard to some of its dealings with charity, or so-called charity. It is quite possible that doubtful enterprises might take sanc-

tuary with some of these departments or organisations, which might possibly welcome such assistance as was offered without discovering whether part of the proceeds was retained, Ananias-wise, or whether the whole of the helpers of the affiliated or approved charity were trustworthy.

The idea of such approval as suggested is a right one if carried out not by legislation, but administration.

The only sound scheme of protection is that of legislation to confer upon the Home Office comprehensive powers for dealing with all charity, and to leave it to them to deal, through the Police authorities, with each case on its merits, whether by suppression, limitation, pressure, amalgamation, or by taking no action and letting them be.

In sum; it would be desirable to prohibit street collections and "snowballs" entirely by legislation. It would be both useless and mischievous to grant official licences, certificates, or approvals of any kind for begging or collecting for any sort of charity, or to any society or agency; but it would be most desirable to give further and far fuller powers of control over such doings to the Home Office and the police, who are already dealing with these matters.

Colonel Churchill "Plays on"

By Austin Harrison

Colonel Churchill's reappearance at Westminster as out-of-office critic illustrates with kinematographic precision the difficulties of Britain at war, struggling all the while with the bag of tricks of her politicians under the strategics of popular government, in which speech-making is the standard of merit, and a man who has once made his mark may always regard himself as the potential constable of the commonwealth. Apart from the indecency, the humbug, the hurricane humour of the spectacle of two First Lords of the Admiralty squabbling in the House at the gravest hour in our history over their respective qualifications for "running" the Navy—qualifications' which at best, and in both cases, are entirely amateurish—the incident, or, as I prefer to call it, the scandal, is so characteristic and explanatory of our weakness, our delays, our blunders, our omissions, our misfortunes, that to allow it to pass by as merely another sensation would be to condone and share in its disgrace.

It is this, the tragic, the incalculably serious side of the matter to which I would call attention, for, indeed, it is here that the root of our troubles lies; nor until we realise it and pillory such acts to our national shame can we hope to rise to our true greatness in war or even remotely develop our vast resources.

Let us look at this Churchill-Balfour incident analytically and see what it means. It is well worth our while. And first a word about the two "leads" in the little drama which so electrified Westminster, beginning with Colonel Churchill.

Colonel Churchill left office, evidently in high dudgeon, shortly after the suppression of the *Globe*, for the admirable reason that he considered the Duchy of Lancaster a mere sinecure—superfluous and unworthy for a man to occupy in war—and so reasoning he set off for France.

Mr. Churchill is, of course, too well known to need any further presentation. I judge solely on results—the results which finally landed him in the superfluous Duchy in question, which, as soon as Mr. Churchill had quitted, Mr. Asquith discreetly filled up.

Those results (of Mr. Churchill's administration of the Admiralty) were briefly: Antwerp and Gallipoli. About Gallipoli this must be said: Mr. Asquith subsequently assumed collective responsibility for that ill-starred political venture, thereby in part exonerating Mr. Churchill. On the other hand, Mr. Asquith side-tracked Mr. Churchill as the result of it into the discreditable Duchy from which Mr. Churchill resigned, so that here we find a difficulty. Either Mr. Asquith was merely trying to shield Mr. Churchill when he assumed collective responsibility for Gallipoli or he behaved distinctly badly to Mr. Churchill in degrading him from the "bridge" to the dunce's desk in the Cabinet—without good cause. This is a Cabinet secret. I make no pretence to any special knowledge, but unless Mr. Asquith had a row with Mr. Churchill—and I don't believe he ever has rows with anybody—then we outsiders can only presume that Churchill went down because of Gallipoli, and that Mr. Asquith in his fatherly way did what he could to protect him from obloquy to keep his flock together. As this is the Asquithian policy, we must believe that version.

Two other things must be remembered. First, Mr. Churchill's quarrel with Lord Fisher, and Lord Fisher's resignation; secondly, Mr. Churchill's Ministerial displays on the mouth-organ. Here he was consistently unfortunate. After Sir John Simon, no Minister has made quite such a donkey of himself as Mr. Churchill as war orator. He talked of "digging out the German Fleet." He boasted of the "hornets" of aircraft which would destroy the Zeppelins. At Dundee he got so deep into the marmalade about a "mile or so" from a stupendous victory that even the Scots could not extract him from it. In truth, every time he spoke with that Thrasonic stutter of his, the Navy shivered, in which connection I earnestly recommend every Minister and politician to read and ponder on the manly, sailor-like speech delivered by Admiral Sir Hedworth Lambton Meux, and very particularly those brave words in which he

hoped his speech would not be described as "breezy," because such conventional nonsense in war was deeply "offensive" to the Navy. But to return to Colonel Churchill.

In office, then, we knew him as the most pretentious braggart of the Twenty-two. It was he who urged that criticism of the Government should be suppressed. No man was more intolerant of criticism than Mr. Churchill —until he went to France and found time, as he has told us, to put in some cool thinking.

Here, again, I must digress. When Mr. Churchill left the Army he was a subaltern, but, lo! somehow he appeared in France as a Major; to-day, hey presto! we greet him as Colonel. I insist on this as a measure of our political conditions, rather than of the man who is entitled to climb as fast as he can, just as his great "chum," Sir F. E. Smith, passes from the part of Attorney-General to Brigadier-General, after the operatic manner of Fritz in the Grand-Duchess of Gerolstein—with music by Offenbach. What I mean by the measure is this. There are to-day hundreds of soldiers—captains, majors, etc.—who have served in the regular army for years and fought and been wounded in France and elsewhere, who are not so rapidly advanced, and, indeed, find advancement a pretty stiff business. They are no doubt delighted—we pride ourselves on our humour —to see a lawyer and a politician, convicted of the most gigantic military blunder since Walcheren, given the stripes and the lace over their heads. We assume, then, that these political commanders are loved in the Army, where jokes are invariably appreciated, but, like all comedy, there is a tragic element in it.

The tragic element is the lack of seriousness that such amateurishness shows. Personally, I would go farther and say that any man, politician, idealist, lawyer, orator, or pacifist, who *accepts* a command in the Army in time of war, reveals himself as an untrustworthy man. For war is a desperately serious thing, and mistakes are apt to prove catastrophic. Only proved merit should be allowed to count. Indeed, any other measure of success is foolish and fatal. And I say as earnestly as I can that the disgruntled politician who votes himself Colonel or Brigadier-General or in the command of the lives of soldiers is no patriot.

He is a danger to the men and to the State. He reveals himself as a politician, a place-hunter, an amateur.

Colonel Churchill's record, then, in office can be summed up concisely as a brilliant series of failures. His words were offensively bumptious, his deeds tragically unsuccessful. He quitted office virtually because he had to. Lord Fisher fell because of him. The Gallipoli tragedy will always be associated with his name. To me it is incomprehensible that any man with such a drama written on his heart would not find at least the grace to fall on his knees and pray for a humbler spirit. Yet not so. Mr. Churchill, who, shortly before the war, offended all Germany by offering her a "naval holiday" and belonged to the pro-German, cut-down-the-Navy gang in the Cabinet, erred even more disastrously during the war, and, in fact, proved himself to be a national danger in command of the Fleet, so that when at last he fell down the hatchway into the ridiculous Duchy, every sane man in these islands felt relieved.

Yet follow his career. After a couple of months in France he pops up in the House as Colonel and solemnly advises Mr. Balfour to take back the man he put out and himself so distrusted (or disliked) that he advised the Government at the time not to employ him.

See the grotesque illogic of his new bantam *rôle* as critic of the Navy. Since his fall he has been in France, where, it may be supposed, his mind and usefulness were employed on military matters, and must have been so employed, seeing that in a couple of months he attained to the rank of Colonel. In that short space of time, how could he have occupied himself with naval affairs? How could he possibly know more than, or as much as, he knew when he presided over the Admiralty? When he was in office everything, he told us again and again, was "top-hole." Does a man have to go to the Front to study naval matters? Has a good soldier, ought a soldier to have, the time to worry about the Navy when his business is the Army, and, if a Colonel, his regiment?

There is no answer to these questions. The only answer is that politicians in modern England regard themselves as governed by no logic or reason. They arrogate to themselves rights and privileges at will. They look

on life as a game of position and preferment. With an absolute shameless indecency they thrust their absurd vanities in the public face in defiance of all national dignity. And so we find Mr. Churchill, nicknamed in the Army the "Duke of Gallipoli," yet strutting back from France a full-blown Colonel to wallop into Mr. Balfour for neglecting the Service that he a few months before had been forced to quit the helm of, practically at the united demand of the country.

I question whether a public man has ever done a more shameless thing. I can only say that in no country but ours would such an outrage be tolerated.

But now I come to the deeper side of the matter, which is the question of Government responsibility. What happened? Simply this. Colonel Churchill stung Mr. Balfour to a rejoinder of peculiar bitterness. He "got it back" on the former First Lord, showed him up, flattened him out. Rightly, without a doubt. It was intolerable that an utterly discredited former First Lord should criticise his successor, and Mr. Balfour was perfectly justified in treating Colonel Churchill as a rather bumptious schoolboy who needed a good dressing down.

Unfortunately, Mr. Balfour went far beyond that. His attitude was that any criticism of the Navy was wrong and unpatriotic. He assumed precisely the same infallibility that Colonel Churchill in office assumed before him. He told us, in short, what we are all sick to death of hearing, that all is wonderful, and that any criticism was contrary to State interests.

That, of course, is bunkum. No Minister should ever talk or explain in war; but in this country, so long as *civilians preside over both Services*, criticism is not only right and wise, it is essential, and no man knows that better than Mr. Balfour. It is our tragedy, and has been our tragedy since August, 1914.

So long as we are governed in war by amateurs and men who have committed almost every possible mistake that could be committed, criticism there must be. Mr. Balfour's attitude is that of the Mandarin.

The Government have had to be whipped on all the time by public opinion. Entirely ignorant of war they have lost one advantage after another, owing to their blindness

and ignorance. Almost everything right that has been done has been forced on the Twenty-two by the Press. Always they have been "too late." Always they are "surprised." Always they are caught "unawares." They have repudiated all responsibility. They have committed mistake after mistake, and still they remain in power, and always their plea and excuse is, "Trust the Government," "Don't criticise," leave us to muddle through as best we may.

Mr. Balfour knows that. I ask him. Who laughed at aircraft before the war? Who believed in Germany? Who sent the soldiers to Gallipoli? Who lost us Turkey? Who lost Serbia? Who lost Montenegro? Who talked of the Freedom of the Seas and signed the Danish Trading Agreement? Who let German reservists pass through the Navy, and still allows all kinds of stuff to pass through into Germany? Who sent the Army to kick its heels about in Egypt and so fall into the German trap? Who sent the ridiculously small expedition in Mesopotamia? Great Heavens! who refused to intern the Germans?

All the time the answer is—the politicians. And always they bleat, "Trust the Government." And always Ministers get up in Parliament and whitewash those responsible for their failures. The Coalition is every bit as much to blame. In many ways they have failed more outrageously than the former Government. They fail because they refuse to accept responsibility. Because they govern by committees; by giving jobs; by political soap, pledges, or dodgery, and the so-called "playing the game"; which means acquiescence, wooden conservatism, hatred of innovation and novelty, energy, initiative, and moral courage.

And yet Mr. Balfour makes his silly speech and talks to us like a schoolmaster at a Sunday School. And Parliament can do nothing. And the Press can do nothing. And the people can do nothing. We can only read the reports of this edifying duel between the young and the old school. "Do something," says youth; "do nothing," says age. Everything is "all right." Now that is exactly what our Ministerial Mandarins have psalmodised to us every week since 1914. And it is because of this imposture that they are able to cling to their posts, no matter how terribly, how often they may blunder, and there is no redress because they have killed all sense

of responsibility in our public life, and with their lawyers' philosophy of compromise and whitewash, nepotism, place-giving, and political wire-pulling, our democracy has neither estate, nor representation, nor a man.

Under an oligarchy of failure and irresponsibility, the public looks on and wonders—wonders at the unending muddles and shames, such as the married men recruiting scandal, for it is told to keep quiet. It keeps quiet because it does not know; because Westminster, which does know, is utterly servile to party tradition, and has no longer any authority or mind.

What the Churchill incident has shown only too palpably is the pathetic incompetence of a so-called popular Government to conduct a great war because of the sheer impossibility of escaping from the political attitude, atmosphere, and habit with which it is enshrouded, on which it upholds itself, and by means of which it perpetuates all its inherent weaknesses both of mind and of character. Nothing since the war began has revealed to us so clearly the working and weakness of our system. We see that the country is absolutely under the thraldom of the politicians, and that Westminster, as an independent force, has ceased to exist. We see, in a word, that any criticism of Governmental methods, notoriously bad methods, weak, inept, and often staggeringly futile, as has been proved again and again—we see that any such criticism is treated by the sacrosanct Twenty-two as sacrilege and sedition, and that such is the power of these Twenty-two conspicuous failures that to-day responsibility is no longer even understood to have any meaning in the country, deprived now of will or intelligence. Politics rule. Politics rule because the people to-day only understand politics.

And so we have the tragic-comedy of Colonel Churchill "going for" Mr. Balfour about the Navy, and Mr. Balfour giving away secrets of Mr. Churchill's naval administration, and he, who is quite as amateurish as Mr. Churchill on naval matters, posing as infallible and scolding all who criticise. The lesson is only too obvious. It is that a country which puts up with such a condition of things gets what it deserves, and will get its deserts precisely so long as it suffers such amateurishness.

Colonel Churchill "played on" this time, but in another

innings he will think out a new scheme and possibly next go it will "come off." It is the game. Politicians in this land of paradox only fear one thing—adultery. A noble woman and a fire-escape smashed Parnell, who was certainly the strongest, most loyal, and courageous statesman we have had since Disraeli. Adultery killed the late Sir Charles Dilke also. But they were sinful men, as the conscientious objectors would tell us. So long as Mr. Churchill's morals are correct, what does Gallipoli matter? What, alas! He sees Lord Haldane lecturing the Peers on a little more "thinking," and he says to himself, "If they stick Hal, why, they'll stick anything." And so it goes on, and must go on under our system of political musical chairs.

The bathos of the incident is that probably Mr. Churchill was more impersonally honest in his recantation in connection with Lord Fisher than at any former period of his public life. He paid the penalty of our political insincerity, and so Mr. Balfour had an easy task in exposing him to shame and ridicule.

The great lesson of Gallipoli is responsibility, and, failing that, the necessity of courageous criticism. We have learnt nothing.

Mr. Churchill's colonelship is a national military scandal. They don't play at war like that in France. The French General Staff would refuse to sanction a political appointment of that kind. A nation which tolerates that need not be surprised if it is always too late and always in the sickness of muddle.

Before the Sunrise

By Austin Harrison

With the advent of spring the days of hope and grim endeavour begin for us. The long winter has passed curiously like the winter of last year; there have been no military decisions; it has been a period of waiting and unprecedented preparation on the two main fronts, broken only by the fighting in the subsidiary theatres of the war and by the great German attack on Verdun, designed obviously as a thrust of anticipation. It is instructive to look back and see what we were saying this time last year.

We were saying identically the same things a year ago that we are saying to-day. The Germans then were starving; they had no fats, no wool, no petrol, no rubber, no cotton; hunger "stalked" the land, and particularly in Austria the people were destitute of all the necessaries of life. The food famine was quite as topical a year ago as it is to-day—German credit must crash, etc., and on the top of the starvation bogy we had the same mathematical competitions as regards the German losses, and the best newspaper "seller" was the senior or junior wrangler of death statistics, the figure generally agreed upon this time last year being a definite loss of 3,000,000 men to the German armies.

In April, 1915, I wrote that these starvation stories "are merely German bluff"; they are largely so to-day; also we have had an official estimate of the total German losses recently given us, so that there is no excuse for further illusion on that score except to that strange section, only too large unfortunately, of the community which insists upon deceiving itself, like the ostrich, or the lady who no longer has a birthday.

In this REVIEW the war is not handled commercially, with a trading eye, that is, on the market illusion of the hour. It has been our endeavour from the beginning to place before the public as much of the truth as is compatible with military expediency; above all, to rouse men and women to a true sense of the gravity of the issue and the stupendous needs of the situation. There is to-day, as there was in April last year, urgent need of considered and brave judgment.

We can, at any rate, assume that the enemy is not starving, proof of which lies in the fact that the famine time-table is twelve months out of date, and still he thrives and, indeed, is able to fare somewhat better, thanks to the lawyer's blockade, which is our contribution, and to the newly-occupied lands, which is the other side of the contribution, towards what has in reality never been much more than a controversy. A word now as to numbers.

Now, as last year, the talk is of numbers—Germany's failing man-power. I do not wish to take part in the casualties "sweep" except to say this, that in all such estimates care should be taken to take into account the probable number of returns. Now, the German average is high, it is probably about 50 per cent. Ours, on the other hand, in the early days of the war was a low average. Here I am merely repeating what a number of surgeons and doctors have told me, and they attribute our losses from wounds to faulty organisation, due largely to experience in South Africa, where, owing to the vast distances, the central object aimed at was the transport of wounded to the bases; shell wounds, also, were the exception. Further, we did not operate for stomach wounds; far too little attention was paid to the gangrenous nature of shell wounds; there was a lack of proper washing *on the field*, etc., so that the results were disappointing, and in certain fields of operation (Gallipoli and Mesopotamia) the medical requirements have been woefully and scandalously inadequate.

This aspect of the question is of vital importance in all estimates of losses. If the Germans can return 50 per cent. of the wounded we must reckon accordingly, because

it means that on 3,000,000 hits 1,500,000 will recover to fight again, and this average, on a population of 67,000,000 people, or, certainly 10,000,000 possible fighting men, requires a great deal of usage before it can be adjudged to be in the declining stage for active operations. There is one other point, the difference in the losses to the Germans in the West and the East. When the Germans made their push against the Russians last summer their losses were out of all proportion low, because the Russians were disastrously short of shells. Battles thus furnish no proportionate estimate of losses. Had the Russian fortresses last summer been defended as Verdun has been defended the German armies would either never have got through or they would have been (not decimated) but annihilated.

Neither famine in men, food, nor material has yet set in. Verdun in itself shows that so unaffected does Germany regard herself still in point of numbers that she is willing to sacrifice lives by the hundred thousand, for were it not so, quite obviously she would confine herself to the defensive: which, as we see, is nowhere the case. The truth is—and we are merely helping the enemy by deceiving ourselves—that Germany has not by any manner of means been reduced yet to the defensive. Her attitude is still the military offensive, nor until the Allies have fought her down to that negation is any object served by pretending the contrary.

Our third trump is money. Here, again (though I know little about economics), I fear we are egregiously deceiving ourselves. All credit is illusion, just as the value of diamonds is illusionary. History is a pretty good guide, yet never in history do we find a war stopped through want of money. When it comes to that, what is bankruptcy? It is merely a transvaluation. Bankruptcy did not defeat Frederick the Great. In private life we are always meeting bankrupts who keep cars and many nice things besides, and dine and wine us with the best. We point to the Jew and say, "He will never stand for it." The question really is not the Jew, for in Germany the Jew has not the power or position that he has with us, but the national attitude, spirit, idealism, training, and character; and here,

from many years of residence in Germany, I say unhesitatingly that in Germany the Huns are Huns.

That is to say, they are first and last soldiers, born and educated to be soldiers. Moreover, there is this driving force behind them—fear. And there is no alternative. The German fear is defeat, for defeat to them signifies the disruption of the Teutonic Empire, the collapse of Pan-Germanism and all German aims and ambitions, the fall of the Hohenzollerns, ruin, shame, bondage—in short, utter and indefinite failure. They know that. For twenty years now, "World Power or Downfall" has been the German cognisance. They have burnt their ships. To-day there must no longer be compromise. It is a fight for the future, the struggle between two irreconcilable groups of civilisations or ideals, and a victorious end can only come when one or the other has been crushed in this war or the next.

When we say the Jews will squeal for peace, the business men will weaken, the commercial spirit of Germany will never face bankruptcy, we forget the ingrained Feudalism, the inveterate fighting sense, the stark unimaginativeness, the historic savagery of the German people, who, more than any other race in Europe, have fought and bled and bitten the dust and yet risen through arms to greatness; with whom war has thus become not only a philosophy, but, in the true Roman spirit, a religion. I do not believe that cosmopolitan finance will shatter the Germans' belief in their own essence of affirmation or being. They have known bankruptcy in their history, and invasion, and devastation, the ignominy of conquest and schism. It is, indeed, in no small part their sufferings in the past which have made them the brutal, arrogant, domineering people that we see them to be to-day. Nor must we forget that the German middle classes are, perhaps, the best educated in the world, to whom death would be preferable to defeat.

Of all latent forces money, I believe, is the least likely to crush the House of Hohenzollern. If it comes to insolvency, probably Germany is insolvent at this moment. The question is not in reality the theoretical value of credit —credit in itself being an entirely artificial value—but

Germany's internal economic power and self-sufficiency. Had we established a real blockade, had we used our sea-power from the first, as Pitt used it in the Napoleonic Wars, the position of Germany to-day would unquestionably be extremely grave. To-day the economic problem of Germany is chiefly the payment of interest on her loans, and it is a problem which may be described as a vicious circle. So long as the mark, internally, preserves its approximate value, there will be money, heaps of it, in circulation, and so long as the Government is able to pay interest her debts, however large, only signify theoretically. Germany is still in the position to pay interest; she probably will be even if she has to pay double that interest as time goes on. At any rate, until the hour comes that she fails to make a balance-sheet, there can be no question of German economic ruin, and in some ways, owing to the valuable additional territory gained, she is to-day better off than she was a year ago.

It is the merest illusion to count on money as the decisive factor—from our point of view a highly dangerous illusion. Time is, in that sense, only relatively on our side, for with the years time would operate against us, as now it operates against Germany. Time is only our military asset, which has enabled us to become a great military Power, to get ready for the issue that lies before us. Economically, I fail to see how time will benefit us any more than it can benefit the enemy.

As we approach the days of renewed fighting, then, we shall be wise to put aside all illusions about starving Germany, or bankrupt Germany, or the failing man-power of Germany, and realise that to-day, as always in war, power remains the decisive factor, and that only military considerations will avail. Here we deal with more tangible values, and here we have reason for confidence. I think we may say this, the Germans now will not prevail. Russia they cannot even aspire to conquer. France, now, they are not likely to. The Germans missed their real opportunity in October, 1914, when our two thin lines alone stood between them and the open country, and—they sufficed. Since then the Allied forces in the West have increased

in power, material, experience, spirit, and confidence until they now stand at a strength which the Germans could only hope remotely to break were they free to throw their full available forces against it; but this is not the case. It is the reason of their desperate attempt to capture Verdun.

They are compelled to fight on both sides, their only chance being anticipation. Always they have to fear the all-single Allied blow; always they have to rush their guns, and troops, and supplies from this frontier to that; always they have to make their effort before the Allies can conjointly make theirs, for the penalty, they know, may be catastrophic. Only superb organisation has enabled them to fight thus to the left and right, alternately, as it were. Only a military national science could compass the task. It is their strength and their weakness, and from now onwards their constant danger. That the Germans fully realise it we know from various signs, not the least of which is their readiness for peace—on "easy" terms. I do not seek to imply that their offensive power has been smashed: by no means is that so. What I mean is that their potential *annihilating* power has gone, the power that alone can ensure absolute victory, and that with it our military opportunity has come and must be put to the test this summer or never.

It was our unreadiness, our failure, to assume the offensive last summer that enabled the Germans to throw their full strength against Russia; as we know, the fighting months of 1915 ended militarily in their favour. The fighting months of 1916, which are beginning, will be our opportunity. Without any doubt, Verdun will be of enormous influence upon the summer fighting, and if, as seems probable, the Germans fail there—fail not only in their immediate strategic object, but in the moral and physical object of that offensive (obviously the weakening and discomfiture of the French armies)—then not only will this summer give us our opportunity, but it will be the supreme crisis in the war on the issue of which the whole future of Europe will depend.

If, that is, we are to win; to obtain our terms; to free

Europe from the last fighting remnants of Feudalism, which have their inspiration in William, the Hohenzollern. Once more Verdun shows the stupendous difficulties of the offensive in modern conditions. Those difficulties cut both ways, that is, they are ours just as much as they are the enemy's. It is for that reason so important for us to throw off our insular gesture—the cult of illusion, which has always been the danger of a conquering people—and to-day to face the facts as they are and not as we would have them. From the first day of the war illusion has been our curse. We are still toying with the illusionary forces of money, the assumed weakness of the enemy, hypothetical statistics of his losses, adventitious aids and circumstances, with fallacies rather than with the positive weapons of victory. I need only refer to the delays and evils caused by the muddle of the married men; the fact that at this hour no State provision has been made as regards the married men to be called up; to the incredible levity of a Government which treats so serious a military problem with the feckless-ness of the ordinary party-political imposture.

This summer our trial begins. We have got to fight in the next few months as never before in our history. It cannot be a period of waiting, as was the case in 1915. And we shall be fighting for definite decisions, and must so fight, if we are to secure them in the present war. We know that to-day we possess a Continental army the equal of any on the field; that we are prepared as never before; that our unequalled resources have begun to bear fruit; that at last we have come to understand the issue of the struggle before us. Our danger is the national habit of not facing facts.

The danger is real, and far more real than even those who recognise it are ready to believe. We still have to beat the Germans, not merely hold them, as at Verdun. The Hun understands no argument except superior force. Alone of all the factors of war force will decide and defeat him; no other. If to-day we may say that he is fighting for terms rather than for spoils or conquests, he is at the same time fighting for self-preservation, and, owing to his posi-tion, he must fight for it. No greater mistake could be made than to assume that at this hour the first defeat will

bring about the dégringolade of German arms and that general breaking-up we so picturesquely imagine. Should the war end in terms, then, so far as we are concerned, and Europe, and democratic freedom, it will have been fought in vain, and its renewal at a later date will be as inevitable as was its outbreak in 1914. For the conditions and ideas which made the war would remain, ready to light into flame at the first opportunity. As the Germans see the war, that is the condition they are aiming at, that is the conjuncture they have left to fight for. For us the question admits of no compromise. Terms will denote Germany's moral victory, and will leave Europe more pledged to militarism than ever before. It is well for us on the eve of the great struggle to realise that.

The only safe way to look to victory is to produce more guns, more shells, more men; to improve our organisation, to develop our resources more, to concentrate more sternly, to apply ourselves ever more nationally, ever more restlessly to our task. We have still an enormous amount to do in point of organisation and national application. Dockers who strike because women are employed should be shamed into a higher sense of citizenship. There are still strikes. There is still much work to be accomplished before we can assume that the military power of Germany has been broken and that the rest will follow of itself. As the war stands to-day decisions are in absolute abeyance.

There is no certainty in war, many unforeseen events may happen, Turkey may cry off, etc., but the idea prevalent here to-day that the failure of the Germans to capture Verdun by a *coup de main* has virtually ended the war is amateurish, and in the highest degree dangerous. We still stand before the sunrise. The whole of our task lies before us, if the solemn pledges of Mr. Asquith are to be fulfilled. We are playing a dangerous game over the delays in forming the new armies, which are merely the reserves of the armies now abroad, who this summer must fight for a decision. No half victory will suffice. Any relaxation on our part in building up reserve armies may lead to the stalemate that the Germans are now fighting for. Knowing the power and spirit of the enemy very intimately,

I warn my countrymen most seriously against the current flippancy which refuses to face facts; which refuses to enforce responsibility from its public men; which drugs itself with the joke about the German submarines being all "fished up"; which even at this fateful hour is "electioneering" here and there to see if it cannot flick up Lord Derby and the Twenty-two to keep their pledges to the nation.*

Not till we grasp the truth and prepare with all our might to meet it have we any reason to speak of a certainty one way or the other. Not until the people here realise that they must have men to lead them instead of committees, and pledges, and artifices, and the mandarin mendacities of amateurs, can we pretend that we are proving the justice of our civilisation. Yet our hope to-day is undimmed, for the spirit of England is finding itself again, awaiting only its own affirmation, in the truth and imagery of patriotism.

* In *The Nation*, March 11th, there appeared an incredible letter advocating the reduction of our armies by half a million men, and, further, that no married men should be enlisted, coupled with the pronouncement that certain Ministers know that "the requirements of the Army must give way to those of industry, finance, and the Navy."

How comes Mr. Massingham to print this treason, which, if acted upon, would cause France to consider under which flag England was flying? Naturally, the letter has been widely quoted in the German Press as proof of our inability to replenish K.'s Armies. Who are these Ministers? Let us have their *names*. Our Boche Press can sink no deeper, nor can anything be conceived calculated more to prejudice the Entente than this letter from J. M. Kennedy (himself a young unmarried man, and quoted in the German Press as a "Conservative deputy"), who, *incredibile dictu*, is reported to work on *The Daily Telegraph* and also the Anti-German Union.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

OWING to the limitation which the Government has imposed on the importation and supply of paper in order to free ships for War purposes, readers of this "REVIEW" are earnestly requested to place their orders in advance at their respective bookstalls, as they may not otherwise be able to obtain a copy.

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Aeroplanes in War

By W. Joynson-Hicks, M.P.

Man, an essentially fighting animal, has invariably turned his attention to the adaptation of the several inventions of his brain to the purposes of warfare, and in contemplating the possibilities of aerial locomotion he has made no exception, for we find the potentialities of flying machines as weapons of offence referred to with enthusiasm by writers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

However, so far as practical politics are concerned, it is sufficient for us to go back to the summer of 1909, when the first public exhibition of the flying of aeroplanes was held at Rheims, in France. This aviation meeting marked the arrival of a number of experimenters, who had worked along more or less practical lines to a certain measure of success.

The Gnome engine made its first appearance at the meeting, and many of the pioneers who then took part are now well known to the world as suppliers of war aeroplanes to the Allies. It is noteworthy that, although something like thirty "aviators" took part, and most of them actually flew, no one was killed or very seriously injured.

Perhaps, however, the first flight which really created any degree of popular sensation in this country was M. Louis Blériot's peaceful invasion of England on his little 25-h.p. monoplane, when he flew the Channel successfully after a couple of abortive efforts by M. Latham, on a 50-h.p. Antoinette, who ended each of his attempts in the sea.

In England, although a certain interest was aroused among the general public in the possibilities of the aeroplane, little practical work was done either by the authorities or by private individuals to adapt the aeroplane to war or commerce. It was regarded at the time almost with that contempt which is attributed to a showman's chattels.

A certain amount of patronage was given by the War Office to the late Mr. S. F. Cody, who, working in conjunc-

tion with the Royal Engineers Balloon Factory at Farnborough, built a large biplane entirely of his own design, but his success was indefinitely delayed by the absence of a reliable engine and the general ignorance of the laws of aerodynamics, which meant that every step taken was bought by bitter experience.

In the early days of aviation the Germans were slow to undertake serious practical experiments, though the University of Göttingen did much research work. German manufacturers preferred rather to sit as spectators and to draw conclusions from the efforts of others. Nevertheless, samples of the more successful French and American machines were purchased and flights were made at different places in Germany, notably over the Templehof Parade Ground at Berlin and at Johannisthal.

The French military authorities were quick to investigate the possibilities of the aeroplane as a fourth arm, and, as early as 1910, a few machines were employed at the annual military manœuvres.

By 1912, however, Germany began to wake up to action. She had watched with concern the French manœuvres and military aeroplane trials of 1911. Money was lavishly poured out to encourage aeronautical research in all its branches. Competitions, backed by the German military and naval authorities, were inaugurated, in which service aviators and civilians were allowed to compete side by side.

Special prizes were offered for reliable engines, and an enormous National Prize Fund was inaugurated to provide bonuses for every German aviator who bettered a record.

The efforts of the German Government were unceasing to improve the breed of the German aeroplane. Every new machine which passed reasonable tests was purchased, and if it really presented any marked improvement it was ordered by the dozen.

For a long period the German Government refused to countenance the idea of the "super-aeroplane." What they wanted first was a reliable low-powered machine, which would go anywhere it was asked; so they limited the power to 100 h.p., which evolved the wonderful Mercédès, Benz, and Argus engines, which are now as dependable as the best car motors.

Meantime, in England, it began to be realised that it was time something was done, and tentative purchases were made of machines of foreign design of promising types, as it seemed to be considered by those in authority that it was as impracticable to build aeroplanes in this country, as to grow tea.

This plan did not succeed, because the foreign builders supplied nothing but those machines which their own Governments did not require.

It became imperative that something should be done, so with much flourishing of trumpets a military competition, more or less on the lines of that held in France in the autumn of 1911, was announced.

This competition, however, marked an epoch, for a definite attempt was then made to establish a Flying Corps in this country on as large a scale as the paltry allowance made in Army Estimates would admit.

A peculiar aftermath of the contest was the extraordinary proportion of the more successful machines entered which were responsible for the deaths of their pilots.

Nevertheless, although the Royal Flying Corps began to acquire a few more aeroplanes, the machines available in emergency were very few, as every aeroplane in flying condition was in continual use at the hands of half a dozen different pilots, with the result that two-thirds of them at least were under repair at any given moment, and the number of machines hopelessly smashed almost cancelled out the new ones delivered.

During 1913 the shortage of aeroplanes in the Royal Flying Corps caused considerable anxiety in aeronautical circles, and numerous questions were asked of Colonel Seely, then Under-Secretary for War. The replies were optimistic, but on the correctness of the figures being challenged it had to be admitted that considerably less than a score of machines existed in flying order, and that the official figures given included dozens of machines which would never take the air again. At one point the agitation became so pressing that the Government made wholesale purchases of obsolete and utterly valueless machines, purely for the purpose of "window dressing." Many of these machines were never flown more than once by service pilots after their purchase.

Meantime, the Naval Wing of the Royal Flying Corps, as it was then called, plodded on steadily with experimental work, and by adopting a far-seeing policy of buying every decently built land-going machine and seaplane which was offered it, saved from bankruptcy and extinction several of the pioneer firms which were threatened with ruin by the deliberate neglect from which they suffered at the hands of the War Office.

Nevertheless, at the sudden outbreak of war the Royal Naval Air Service was but little better supplied with machines than the Royal Flying Corps. At the "concentration" of the Royal Flying Corps on Salisbury Plain in June of 1914 the Military Wing was able to collect something like thirty aeroplanes from all over the country, and at the Spithead Review, in July, 1914, the Royal Naval Air Service demonstrated with a somewhat less number of seaplanes backed by certain land-going aeroplanes, but to do so had to stop all flying for a fortnight beforehand.

All this meant that five squadrons of the Royal Flying Corps (all short of their establishment) had to bear the whole brunt of the early fighting in France.

Fortunately, perhaps, for the Royal Naval Air Service, it was not called upon to perform its real work as the eyes of the Fleet, owing to the lack of German naval operations on a large scale, for, despite the bravery and skill of our naval aviators, they could hardly have hoped, with the few primitive seaplanes in their possession, to carry the whole burden which Grand Fleet operations on the part of the enemy would have imposed upon them.

At the present time all this has, of course, changed. We now possess hundreds of naval and military aeroplanes, and hundreds of pilots trained, or in training, to fly them.

The number is insufficient. Some machines and pilots are worked far too hard for efficiency, and this is particularly so in the case of the machines. If things were as they should be every pilot should have at least three machines for his use, and even then two would generally be in the repair shop, and a sufficient number of spare aeroplanes should be available immediately to replace every machine which was badly smashed.

The Germans did all this long before war broke out.

A British pilot is thankful if he can have the exclusive use of one machine.

Further, every pilot should have three months' rest every half-year; the strain of constantly flying over the German lines is almost inconceivable.

It is not merely more aeroplanes that are required, but better aeroplanes. Up to the outbreak of war the greatest speed ever attained on an aeroplane (irrespective of the wind) was 135 miles in the hour, a feat performed by a Frenchman. The greatest height reached was 25,000 feet; the longest non-stop flight 24 hours 12 minutes; and the longest distance travelled in a single flight 1,250 miles. All these last records were made by German pilots.

Unfortunately, it is not possible in the light of present knowledge to design an aeroplane to combine all the qualities enumerated above. For instance, an excessively fast machine will not fly for long distances, and the high flyer sacrifices speed.

At the commencement of hostilities the aim of all the countries interested had been to combine these desiderata to the highest degree possible, so as to evolve an aeroplane which could do all things well, but the claims of modern warfare became so exacting on these unfortunate machines that they literally sank under the weight.

An 80-h.p. biplane was asked to carry a pilot, observer, machine gun, much ammunition, four or five hours' fuel, some bombs, heavy photographic apparatus, and in some cases a wireless equipment; and in the case of the British Flying Corps, at any rate, things got to such a pitch that the aeroplanes were nick-named "Christmas-trees."

Disaster was inevitable—overloaded machines side-slipped near the ground and killed or maimed their passengers and pilots, others refused to climb to a safe altitude and were shot down by enemy artillery. Although academic discussions in peace time had debated the possibility of specialised aeroplanes for specialised jobs, none of the belligerents were prepared with anything with this object in view, except, perhaps, the British, whose little single-seater scouts formed a class apart.

As a consequence, the British, the French, and the Germans were equally caught napping in this respect—the other combatant Powers do not count—and, unfortunately

for ourselves, we were the last to take the lesson to heart.

After a few months' bitter experience with the multi-purpose aeroplane the Germans hastened to specialise—hence the Fokker monoplane, of which we hear so much, the big battle-aeroplane, the large bomb-dropper, and the lightly loaded, fast aeroplane for reconnaissance purposes.

The French were not long in following suit. Their first notable production was the heavy steel biplane with a shell-firing gun, which can fight its way by sheer strength through the German air defence and protect machines laden with bombs on their way to enemy strongholds. The French, too, were not long in producing twin-engined biplanes of large size, which could work past the enemy's lines with a load of bombs by outclimbing anything which might attempt to molest them.

We for our part did not move so rapidly. Enormous contracts had been placed for the low-powered reconnaissance machines designed by the Royal Aircraft Factory, and these had to be worked off. Even now the number of special aeroplanes is small, and we must have more if we are to beat the German at his own games—for he has several.

We must beat him at bomb dropping, beat him at artillery spotting, at accurate reconnaissance, and we must drive his aeroplanes out of the skies.

To do all this large numbers of machines must be built of four different and distinct types.

(1) Reconnaissance aeroplanes of moderate power, fitted with armament which will adequately protect them from attack, capable of carrying two persons and a reasonable load of fuel and photographic apparatus. This type of machine we have in part, but the present-day reconnaissance machine is burdened with equipment it should not be asked to carry. We cannot have too many of this type, as work of this nature is probably the most important that any aeroplane is asked to perform in war.

(2) Small, high-powered, single-seater aeroplanes, fitted with machine guns and carrying the pilot and a couple of hours' fuel. These machines, which may be of the scout biplane type, must sacrifice every consideration to speed and high rate of climb. Their work is to chase and destroy

any enemy reconnaissance machine which attempts to cross the lines, and to tackle any other class of intruder which may be within their powers. These machines, if well handled, can blind the German gunners as effectually as can an apache blind his victim with red pepper, and their success would save thousands of soldiers' lives and tens of thousands of pounds' worth of material.

(3) A small, fast, single-seater aeroplane, fitted with wireless apparatus, and, optionally, a machine gun, for co-operation with both field and heavy artillery. The work of these machines would be to go out over the enemy lines and fly around the target which the artillery are endeavouring to hit and to note where each shell falls, whether too short or too long, whether left or right of the objective, and to inform the batteries of the result of each shot. Such a machine needs great speed to make it a difficult mark for anti-aircraft guns, and high speed may assist to secure it from molestation from enemy aircraft.*

(4) The last class needed are big weight-carrying machines, capable of carrying large loads of bombs a considerable distance into enemy country. These machines cannot be of high speed, and should therefore be protected by fighting machines from enemy aircraft. The fighting machines may be similar machines heavily armed, but without bombs.

These are the machines which could destroy the enemy's lines of communication, his trains, his stations, his supply columns, and, above all, Essen itself.

As has been mentioned before, the Germans started in to specialise their aeroplanes at a very early date. They did not produce anything particularly revolutionary: they merely adapted existing aeroplanes to their needs.

For instance, the Fokker monoplane, of which so much has been heard lately, is practically a copy of a type of French monoplane first produced in 1912, and developed in 1913, but with a vastly more powerful engine.

Armed with a fixed machine gun firing straight through the path of the propeller, the French pilots did very serious execution among German machines. The Germans

* I recently stood close to one of our biggest guns while it was firing, and within two minutes the attendant aeroplane reported by wireless the exact spot on which the huge shell had fallen.

did not like it, so they built similar machines themselves, and, serving them out to their most fearless pilots, they set to work to patrol the rear of the fighting line, where they have accounted for many of our less speedy aeroplanes.

I am sorry, however, to have to record that they no longer confine their activity to waiting on their own side of the line, but boldly come over and attack, and at times destroy, our less powerful machines.

The Germans also experimented with a huge two-tailed biplane with engines and tractor screws to correspond. Apparently, however, this was not considered a success; at all events, it was not built in quantities.

In its place, however, came two very tough customers, one a single-tailed tractor biplane with two engines stuck out right and left on the bottom main plane, and another single-engined tractor biplane with a 200-h.p. motor. Both these machines were used for reconnaissance and as battle aeroplanes, for they carried two gunners apiece in addition to the pilot, and often four or five machine guns arranged to fire in any conceivable direction.

The single-engined machine was particularly fast, and, although its large size made rapid manœuvring difficult, the arrangement of its armament made it an ugly opponent from any aspect: indeed, it is whispered that at a certain sector of the line the Allied aeroplanes were kept on the ground for days by its ministrations, until certain fast British scout aeroplanes were procured which could attack it with some hope of success.

Where, however, the Germans have undoubtedly scored is in the possession of perfectly reliable engines. The encouragement given by the German Government in peace time has left its mark, and the upright engines they now employ are as reliable as the best car motors. There is no recorded instance of any German aeroplane being forced to land behind the Allies' lines by engine trouble. Would that we could say the same!

In England, until the pressing needs of war made themselves felt to the authorities in this country, it was accepted almost as an axiom that it was impossible to build a respectable aeroplane engine in this country. A number of hard-working engineers had turned out creditable engines in this country, some to their own design and some as copies of

Continental types. Some of these, notably the Green, the Sunbeam, and the A.B.C. motors, beat records, and compared more than favourably with foreign products for efficiency and reliability.

It is recorded that one aviation enthusiast who had already built up a great aeroplane business undertook to put up the whole complicated plant necessary to build a certain very popular French engine in this country if the Government would only guarantee him an order for fifty engines, but they refused, and so a valuable source of supply was shut out indefinitely.

Things were so bad at the outbreak of war, so far as the supply of aero engines was concerned in this country, that anyone intimately concerned with the aeroplane industry could calculate accurately from memory almost exactly how many high-powered engines were available in England and exactly in whose possession they were! Fortunately for ourselves, we had the French as our friends, and they allowed us to import hundreds of their best engines. Had the war taken another course our output of aeroplanes for the ensuing six or nine months would have been absolutely limited to the paltry dozen or two engines that happened to be knocking around unused.

All this, thanks to the utter discouragement endured by British engineering firms while the Government was smugly contemplating the efforts of the Royal Aircraft Factory to bolster up their own products.

The whole essence of the shortage of aeroplanes and engines of the right kinds lies in the struggle which has been going on between those concerned in the aeroplane industry and the Government advisers.

As regards the aeroplane industry, it is enough to say that the private firms which go to make it up are responsible for most of the real advances which have been made in aviation.

Their principals are practical engineers—no private factory with unpractical men can survive, and the open competition under which they work makes it necessary for them to advance. All the aeroplanes on which the most notable flights have been made are the products of private enterprise, just as the best things in guns, torpedoes, and warships have been turned out at private factories and shipyards.

It is, of course, well known that many private firms are building aeroplanes to official design, and the achievement of their products is, of course, limited to the qualities given them by those who were responsible for their design.

What is most emphatically needed is for the best designs that can be got out by any constructors for the four types of machines previously enumerated to be adopted generally for a period, and for all hands to concentrate on building machines in whole or part of those types and no other. In settling the type do let our designers and controllers take their courage in both hands and go for the big machine with high engine power—the future of the air battle will be with the nation whose imagination is allowed free play in the horse-power of its aero-engines. By this means, and this means only, can we hope to get the fleets of aeroplanes that are necessary before we can think of assuming a strong aerial offensive.

Be it remembered that we cannot spare a single aeroplane or pilot for purely offensive work until every need of our army in the field for aeroplanes and aviators is fulfilled, and all questions of aggression on our part and home defence must be subservient to this need.

Nevertheless, the Zeppelin danger must be considered with a view to its abolition, and solved it can be if we make up our minds to efficient organisation.

Before attempting to formulate a scheme for stopping these raids it is well to examine the potentialities and limitations of this type of aircraft.

A Zeppelin is essentially a rigid balloon some 600 feet long and 50 feet in diameter. An easier comparison of its size may be given in the fact that it would just fill up St. James's Street, from Piccadilly down to the Palace. The details of its working are immaterial to the proposition in hand—what we are concerned with is what it can and cannot achieve. Such a vessel can travel under a war load at sixty miles an hour in still air, for anything up to twenty hours. Its range of operations is strictly limited by the weight of its fuel, which runs into several tons on a long trip. The amount of bombs it can carry is governed by the weight of the fuel it has to take on board, but as far as raids on England are concerned, Zeppelins are forced to carry so

much fuel that not more than a ton of explosive is to be expected on each airship.

As regards weather conditions, wind is the Zeppelin's worst enemy, for not only does a high wind impede it on its journey, but it makes the operations of starting and landing more hazardous than they would otherwise be.

The speed of an airship is its speed over the ground in calm air. The velocity of the wind must be added or subtracted according as it is with or against the airship. Thus a Zeppelin whose speed is 60 miles an hour can only advance 25 miles an hour against a wind of 35 miles an hour, but can travel at 95 miles an hour with such a wind astern.

Where the real trouble, however, occurs is where the airship has to travel with the wind abeam, because then it is driven off its true course and makes leeway, as a sailor would put it, and the pilot has therefore to head it into the wind as much as circumstances dictate in order to counteract the drift. As, of course, it is impossible for the crew of an airship to determine the exact velocity and direction of the wind once they have left the ground, navigation is particularly difficult under these conditions, more so at night time.

The only remedy is for the pilot to head his airship into what he considers to be approximately the correct direction after taking into consideration the velocity and direction of the wind (and any changes which are likely to occur in either) and endeavour to pick up land marks on the way in order to check the dead reckoning.

Zeppelins loaded up for a flight under war conditions are limited to an altitude of about 10,000 to 14,000 feet, and a really well-designed aeroplane can reach this altitude as quickly as the larger craft, namely, in from twenty to forty-five minutes. A Zeppelin can, however, climb at a prodigious rate for about 1,000 feet at any altitude in case of emergency. This is achieved by depressing the tail of the aircraft by the use of the elevators while travelling at full speed and causing it to shoot up obliquely just like an aeroplane. It is said that this distance has at times been climbed in as short a space as thirty seconds, but, needless to say, the practice is not good for the airship, as the sudden strain put on the framework by the displacement of the

heavy cars is apt to put things out of gear. Nevertheless, more than one Zeppelin has escaped pursuit in this manner.

These points must be taken into consideration when formulating plans for repelling airship attacks. Three defensive courses present themselves.

First is the question of meeting airship with airship. This is difficult, because in the past we have done little in this country to develop the airship. Still, we need not despair on this score, because we still have money and men for experiment, and if those who know most about airships were given a free hand a very formidable rival to the Zeppelin could be evolved in a very short time.

Such an airship need not be of the size or power of a Zeppelin, because it is required purely for defensive purposes and has no long journey to perform to get to the scene of operations. A sentinel airship over a town may in calm weather remain stationary and conserve its fuel till the time comes for action. Moreover, given reasonable warning, such an airship can bide in its shed and only rise to give battle when the approach of an intruder is announced.

What is really wanted is a very fast airship, able to outpace and outclimb a Zeppelin, and there are people in the Royal Naval Air Service who can build airships of this kind if they are given the word and the necessary resources.

Carrying suitable bombs there is no reason why an airship of this sort should not make things very uncomfortable for a Zeppelin.

Aeroplanes of suitable and specialised types built and equipped for long-distance flights should patrol the coasts at great altitudes on all nights when Zeppelins can possibly fly. It is but little use to send an aeroplane from the ground to attack an airship—the aeroplane must be ready to dive at the airship from above and drop its missiles before the airship's crew can get out of the way.

Here once more comes the cry for larger and more reliable engines.

As regards artillery, anti-aircraft guns can be made quite effective for protecting definite points, such as towns and docks, if they are properly placed and manned. Remember, however, they must be quite capable of hitting the Zeppelin at a height of, say, 15,000 feet, and not mere

popguns such as are still in use in certain parts of England. It is essential, moreover, that the guns be worked by men who have had practice at shooting at enemy aircraft on active service, and the guns should be placed in "bouquets" of ten or twelve instead of in an irregular circle, so that the gunners are confused by distracting cross-fires. The Germans have scored most of their hits on our aeroplanes by pumping dozens of shells from one point aimed approximately in the same direction. With this system the chances of scoring a hit with one shell or the other are reasonably good.

But whether it is decided to use guns, airships, or aeroplanes to defeat the Zeppelins, the one essential thing is organisation and complete co-ordination of all units. Without this nothing can be done, and money and life will be risked to no purpose.

Despite various agitations which have been made in the Press for aerial reprisals on Germany, it has been impossible for us to do anything up to now for sheer lack of the means to make raids. The French aviators have filled in their spare time by bombing the German frontier towns, and so far as they have been able to go the raids have been quite successful in that such damage as has been done has caused considerable perturbation of mind among the population who, earlier in the campaign, had considered themselves out of the war zone.

At the present moment we are in a position, if we go the right way about it, to get ready for raids on a big scale. There are three main objectives at which to aim, namely, Zeppelin sheds and aircraft parks, fortifications in general, and more or less open towns.

Probably the first and third are the more important, in view of the effect likely to be created.

In the first place, the wrecking of airships and aeroplanes must react directly upon the number of machines which raid this country. In the second place, raids on open towns are in the nature of reprisals, and aeroplane raids on a really large scale must produce demands from the civilian population of Germany to the Government to reconsider whether the damage they are able to inflict on England is worth the price they have to pay for it.

The German Zeppelin sheds are situated chiefly along the Rhine at such places as Mülhausen, Freiburg, Strass-

burg, Carlsruhe, Mannheim, Darmstadt, Frankfort, Bonn, Cologne, and Düsseldorf, and round the Kiel district at Wilhelmshafen, Cuxhaven, Fuhlsbuttel, Hamburg, and at Kiel itself.

All these places can be reached by aeroplanes specially built for the job, but, owing to the inevitable inaccuracy of bomb dropping and the necessity of flying high, the raids must be conducted on a large scale.

Similar raids on big towns, railway junctions, and other vulnerable points should do much to disorganise German internal administration. We have the money, the men—what is still wanting is common-sense organisation and the proper allocation of responsibilities.

Although it may seem but a dream, there is every possibility of raiding Berlin itself. Berlin is many miles from the western front, but she is only 150 miles or so from the Baltic Sea. This is a point from which she can be assailed, and doubly so, because if aeroplane-carrying ships, escorted by the Russian Fleet, frequent those waters and molest the German metropolis on every possible occasion, the German Fleet will be kept busy guarding Berlin from the Russians.

A bomb on Berlin is worth three dropped near the frontier. The inhabitants at Metz and Strassburg have been trained to be prepared in a certain degree for the side-shows of war, but the bourgeois population of Berlin look upon security as their civic right, and their plaints will not be few if they are called upon to assist personally at the manifestation of modern frightfulness.

Quite apart, however, from the moral effect such raids are capable of causing, there is much disorganisation and damage which may be achieved by raids on the right machines on the right places by the right pilots, with the right bombs and in the right numbers, and we must not rest until all that is advocated here is an accomplished fact.

Rubber

By Raymond Radclyffe

We are engaged in a life and death struggle for existence. This has been said so often that no one now takes the least notice. But it is true, and the main reason why we don't realise the truth is that everybody, from peer to publican, is happily engaged in making money. We may be fighting for our lives, but we are making the fight profitable. The Treasury had some dim idea at the back of its wooden head that no one ought to gamble on the Stock Exchange, so it compelled the Committee to abolish fortnightly accounts, contangoes, and all the machinery whereby a gambler can pretend that he is an investor and can run a hundred thousands pounds of stock with only a ten pound note at his bankers. All who felt that they must buy stocks and shares were compelled to pay cash. The plan read excellently well—on paper. But it did not prevent gambling; it did not deter the moneylender from advancing money on shares, it only allowed him to charge a higher rate of interest. Jobbers continued to make prices, many of them still went on selling short. Rigs assumed a different aspect, but rigs remained a profitable game. The Stock Exchange, much cleverer than the Treasury, soon found means to evade the spirit of the silly Treasury Rules.

One market which has attracted the gambler is rubber. Here there were plenty of shares valued in pence which could be paid for by even the poorest punter. Also, there were many sound shares which moneylenders were glad enough to lend upon. As a result, we have seen prices in the rubber market advance one and two hundred per cent. A big business has been done. All bargains are supposed to be for cash, but actually the technical difficulties of delivering caused such long delays that many people who bought a thousand shares at 2*s*. resold them at 3*s*. without having ever seen the scrip. Buyers who do not press for delivery may wait months before they get what they have ordered, and in a rising market it is not a hard matter to sit in your office and watch profits accumulate without

having to pay out any cash. Indeed, it is a pleasant amusement, and soothes the war-worried. But it is not exactly what the Treasury intended.

When war broke out rubber shares slumped like everything else. But the *Emden* was destroyed and our spirits rose. Also, the United States began buying rubber on a grand scale. Brazil was in no condition to increase supplies, for the Brazilian trade depends largely upon finance, and this was not forthcoming. Mexico was out of the question, she could not contribute many pounds of either Castilloa or Guayule. West Africa was equally *hors de combat*, her quota being half that of 1911–1912; thus the whole demand fell upon the plantations of Malaysia, Java, Sumatra, and Ceylon. Prices consequently rose. The increased American demand seems due to three things. First, the arrival of the "Jitney," a private motor which in every town began to compete with the electric trolley car. Secondly, the desire of the Americans to build roads and use them; and, thirdly, the great prosperity of the U.S. Factories, which had been using Jelutong, Guayule, Castilloa, or fine hard-cured Para, soon adapted their plant to Plantation, and to-day this type of rubber has supplanted all other varieties. The war, which everyone expected would have a bad effect upon the Plantation industry, has been its salvation. The end of the year saw Plantation quoted round 4*s*. It had doubled in price, and this in spite of the fact that supplies from the eastern plantations had increased 29,000 tons in 1915 over preceding years. Rubber is now just under 3*s*. 6*d*.

Prices of rubber have naturally followed the quotation for the raw product. Linggis, the leader of the market, were quoted as low as 11*s*. during 1914; before the end of 1915 they had touched 20*s*. 3*d*., and they are now round 19*s*. 6*d*., which means that speculators count upon getting a final dividend next May sufficient to increase the dividend from 75 to 100 per cent. Forty-five per cent. has already been paid in interim dividends. Turning from the sublime to the ridiculous, the sixpenny shares of the Victoria Malaya were nominally 1½*d*. in 1915, but they changed hands when the rise set in at 1*s*. 1½*d*., though a dividend seems particularly remote. The public have been searching the share lists, and they bought, not what was good, but what was

cheap. They wanted to gamble, and they felt that they should be economical in war time. Consequently every sort of share pusher has secured options upon the shares of long-forgotten companies and has pushed the shares upon an eager public. The harder the push the higher rose the share. Thus we have run a kind of faint imitation of the Great Rubber Boom when Linggis were dealt in over 70*s*.

The fact is, rubber shares look an extremely easy method of making money. No intelligence is required, only a small knowledge of arithmetic. For example, Linggi—I only mention this company because it has always led the market—has 8,200 acres planted, of which a portion, say, 5,000 acres, produced in 1915 the not extravagant crop of 1,533,740 lb.; we know that costs in the year 1914 were 1*s*. 1·11*d*.; we feel sure that they will drop to 1*s*.—all self-respecting companies can make costs 1*s*. or even less. We know that rubber has been as high as 4*s*. during the year; we therefore assume that the management must have sold at 3*s*. This gives 2*s*. per lb. profit, or, £153,374 profit on a capital of £140,000, of which £10,000 are 7 per cent. Prefs. One hundred per cent. dividend only calls for £137,000 and leaves enough to pay excess profits tax with the amount brought in. But has the company sold all its rubber at 3*s*., and has it reduced its costs to 1*s*.? These are questions the gambler does not ask, and even if he asked he wouldn't get any answer. Personally, I don't think Linggi will pay 100 per cent., and therefore I can see no reason why people should desire to pay 19*s*. 6*d*. for a 2*s*. share. But the gambler says that Linggi has "large acreage in reserve which it will plant up, and that even if rubber drops to 2*s*. per lb. the company will go on increasing its output till it gets a crop of at least four million pounds, which, as any schoolboy can show, must give a profit, at 1*s*. per lb., or £200,000, which should pay a dividend one day of 150 per cent., and thus yield a purchaser 15 per cent. on his money. Of course, the real optimist doesn't calculate upon a yield of 300 lb. to the acre as I have done; he says that many companies yield 400 lb. and even more. Therefore, why not Linggi? Why not, indeed! Again, he points out that as the trees get older the yield increases enormously, and an optimist who sticks at nothing would snort at my very modest figures. He could easily prove, on paper, that

Linggi, when all its land was fully planted, must pay 300 per cent., and thus give 30 per cent., even at the present huge premium of 17*s.* 6*d.* on the 2*s.* share. We had wonderful examples of the arithmetical optimists when the big boom was on. They conclusively proved that Linggis at 70*s.* were a gift. The fact is, the human mind is much happier when it resolutely takes only one side in an argument.

But looked at calmly there seem good reasons why investors who desire a higher yield than 6 or 7 per cent., which is the best they can hope to get outside rubber and gold mines, should consider good rubber shares. I lay emphasis on the word "good." There are dozens of badly-managed plantations. There are many whose soil will never be good enough to grow rubber at a profit when rubber finds its bedrock bottom price. In some plantations the trees were badly tapped in the old days and have been irretrievably injured. Some companies have land which is unhealthy, and here low costs are almost impossible. Others have local difficulties. But a company that has always been working at a low cost and always giving a yield of over 350 lb. to the acre and whose capitalisation per planted acre is low, say, under £50, is a good speculative purchase whenever the shares drop to a level which gives the purchaser 10 per cent. on his money.

Many of the Malay companies which started in the early days before the boom began were moderately capitalised—Selangor, one of the oldest, having been registered in 1899, has 2,268 acres planted: capital £30,000; crop for 1915 624,912 lb.; costs last year 10*d.*; dividend 1914 was 100 per cent., may pay 150 per cent., or even more. The yield, with price at 26*s.* 6*d.*, would then be 11¼ per cent. Batu Caves, started in 1904, has 1,690 acres planted: capital £26,750; paid 150 per cent. in 1914; crop for 1915 is 602,632 lb.; costs are 10½*d.*; and the dividend for past year may be 160 per cent. The shares, which were under £10 when war broke out, are now £13, and are not expensive, for the plantation is admirably managed. Bukit Rajah, Anglo-Malay, and Cicely are some of the veterans of the Malay States, and the shares can always be purchased with safety whenever they fall to a price which yields 10 per cent. Kuala Lumpur, Edinburgh, Kepong, Strathmore, United Serdang, Kuala Selangor, and

Straits Rubber are all admirably managed, with low costs, good land, and moderate capitalisation.

We must never forget that all tropical industries are more or less speculative, and should, therefore, give an investor 10 per cent. We really know very little about rubber. We are learning every day. We do not know how long the trees will continue to yield. They appear to be in their prime when they are from eight to twelve years old, but I was shown the private tapping sheets of one old estate by which it would appear that the eight- and nine-year-old trees were falling away in yield very considerably. We appear to have more or less mastered the diseases which troubled the early planters so seriously, and we have almost arrived at the conclusion that seventy-five trees to an acre gives the highest yield per tree, and is the most economical. On the whole the rubber industry is well managed, practically all the managers are honest, the bulk of the companies are moderately capitalised, and the great majority are carefully financed. All the companies give the fullest information to the Press, they publish their yields each month, working costs and sale price are set forth, the directors are not overpaid, and London expenses in most cases are very moderate. Some of the groups have a bad habit of charging a portion of their London expenses to revenue on the ground that the land is not fully producing, but this vicious custom is not general; indeed, it is uncommon. The big groups, such as the Straits, Harrisons and Crosfield, Rutherfords, Williamsons, Guthries, and Addinsells, run their companies on sound lines. Rubber-planting with such people is not a share-pushing game, but an industry to which they give the whole of their attention and a planting experience which most of them gained in the East long before rubber was ever thought about. That is one reason why rubber shares have remained a popular investment ever since they were first introduced, and as long as the controlling groups continue to act as commercial men and not as promoters, for so long will the public give them their confidence.

Musical Notes

By Edwin Evans

At the end of February there occurred an event the significance of which has been missed by the chroniclers. The Royal Philharmonic Society withdrew a promised first performance on the ground, publicly and officially stated, that the work needed more rehearsal. The admission is so pregnant with promise of future achievement that it almost compensated for the disappointment. The composer, that pariah of the musical world, accustomed to accept kicks meekly and disburse halfpence instead of receiving them, has had hitherto to deem himself lucky if his band parts reached the desks at all, and pampered if his work was given a "run-through" before performance. I refrain from the cheap gibe that, had the new work been by Richard Strauss, due precaution would have been taken to have it adequately rehearsed, because Sir Thomas Beecham has always been commendably free from that particular form of snobbery. The mere recognition of the principle is enough for me. The one doubt remaining is whether our composers will possess the moral courage to quote the precedent of Arnold Bax and insist that postponement is a lesser evil than a scratch reading. I firmly believe that our orchestral players have few equals in performance and none in their quick assimilation of the written or printed page. I am prepared to admit that they need less rehearsing than is customary on the Continent. But they are not such wonder-workers as to master the detail and nuance of a complex modern score by glancing through their parts. It simply cannot be done.

At the same time, the disappointment to Mr. Bax must be great, as his fantasy, "Spring Fires," had previously been included in the prospectus of one of the festivals which were abandoned at the outbreak of war. It is also a disappointment to the musical world, which is gradually coming to recognise the worth of his compositions. He has

hitherto suffered from a very common form of misjudgment. As a student he gave proof of an astonishing facility. In the mere subsidiary accomplishment of reading a score at sight feats which appeared little short of miraculous in Liszt's day were surpassed by him when he was scarcely out of his teens. His mastery of the technical details of composition was so rapid that immediate and compelling success was predicted for him, and he has suffered, in a vague, indeterminate sense, from an inevitable reaction when these hopes seemed to materialise slowly in comparison with the more modest promise of some of his contemporaries. But it is precisely the offset of facile genius that, even when it does not lead directly to indolent procrastination, it frequently retards, and sometimes frustrates, great achievement. In another sphere most of the adverse criticism levelled at Sir Thomas Beecham, whose outstanding natural genius is no longer contested, arises from the over-confidence, based on conscious facility, which prompts him to adopt an "all right on the night" attitude towards every task he undertakes. Had his remarkable achievements demanded more labour, it is probable that they would have been more perfect.

In the case of Arnold Bax facility led, as it so often does in artists, to over-elaboration and excess of ornament. It would have been at any time a safe prediction that his ideas would take time to emerge into the open. At first one could not see the forest for trees. But he cut away much of the undergrowth, and, in doing so, came to visualise his trees in groups, whereby the selective instinct obtained more play. I do not know at first hand, but I should imagine that his recent works have been more tardy than their predecessors in reaching the finished state, and I should take it as a good sign. In the last orchestral pieces the delicate phantasy of his musical imaginings was no longer obscured, and their quality establishes a new phase in his work, in which facility has given way to concentration. That is why it is disappointing to be denied a hearing of "Spring Fires."

A remarkable feature of the times is the number of "first performances" of British chamber music, due to the activities of our two leading quartet parties, who have brought to light some works which had been awaiting a

hearing, and stimulated composers to take advantage of current opportunities by writing others. The new quartets of Frank Bridge and Eugene Goossens, which are among the most striking of recent introductions, present an interesting contrast. The former proves that it is possible, whilst remaining within the established tradition, to be thoroughly modern in form and feeling, whilst the latter shows the advantage, when using the "advanced" harmonic idiom that is rejected by the champions of tradition, of employing the classic forms. It is an old story. Debussy's quartet is the most formal of his compositions, and Ravel's is as shapely as any of Mozart's. For diffuseness and lack of formal purpose we look nowadays to the "post-romantics." Your typical twentieth-century composer has as keen a sense of balance as his eighteenth-century ancestor. It is the nineteenth century that got out of hand.

As a contribution to the progress of music Mr. York Bowen's quartet does not compare with those of Bridge and Goossens, but only those who realise how much good stone has been quarried from that melodic seam can understand the feat of extracting from it a slow movement that owes none of its freshness to the mere carving of pattern. It is not very difficult to be interesting by means of devices that attract attention by their newness. Ingenuity, then, often masks lack of inspiration. But only melodic inspiration will save a page that owes nothing to ingenuity. Hence this quartet, which one might almost call reactionary, has, nevertheless, its place between the other two.

Among these new works are several very interesting contributions in the smaller forms. Chamber music no longer takes itself as seriously as it did in the days of St. James's Hall. Hence we have miniatures by J. B. McEwen, a couple of "genre" pictures by Goossens, and a number of similar diversions which are greatly appreciated between two works of classic proportions. With a repertory that is both rich and varied, and performers who are second to none of those that visited us in the past, the future of British chamber music would be assured but for the prospect that military service may break up the existing organisations, which it would not be easy to replace.

Books

ESSAYS AND GENERAL LITERATURE

PHOTOGRAMS OF THE YEAR. Edited by F. J. MORTIMER. Hazell, Watson, and Viney. 2*s.* 6*d.* net.

It is highly satisfactory to think that this charming annual, now in its twenty-second year, has been enabled to appear in circumstances so adverse as those of the present moment. The book contains upwards of a hundred reproductions, beautifully done and illustrative of the present state of the art in various countries (worth framing, many of them), as well as some letterpress of more than common interest. The price is absurdly cheap for a book of this value.

THE GREAT RETURN. By ARTHUR MACHEN. The Faith Press, 22 Buckingham Street, Strand. 1*s.* net.

There is poetry and grace in this dream—this dream (or is it a prophecy?) of a new Wales, freed from the shackles of a savage Nonconformity and irradiated with the rosy light of better things. A noble dream! The story flows along with such unconventional ease that one hardly realises how cleverly it has been put together. We detect, above all things, a passionate sincerity in the telling. Mr. Machen has given us idealism of the right kind—human, tangible. We have vastly enjoyed his "Great Return."

FICTION

THESE TWAIN. By ARNOLD BENNETT. Methuen and Co., Ltd. 6*s.*

A molentrave on marriage, one may call Mr. Bennett's latest epic of the Five Towers, or, perhaps, it may be described more prosaically as how to be dull yet interesting. The book is really meticulously dull, deliberately dull, absorbingly dull. No doubt the war has rather dimmed the jocundity of the world-famous "Card" of Clayhanger, for in this volume he contrives to see life with a terrible earnestness in which the problem of marriage

plays its human and entertaining part, and this, indeed, is the central interest of the book. Marriage: even so, the old thing, and here we find the author a bit unconvincing. Always Hilda's kiss is the solution. Rather unusually in Mr. Bennett, he dwells on this kiss, as if he had just discovered the thing, and is evidently at pains to insist upon the sensual side of marriage, which is somewhat at variance with his former works. And he turns up trumps for marriage. That is the moral. It is all very interesting, deftly spun, accurately observed; it is certainly life, and presented without trickery or nonsense, yet we must express the hope that there won't be a sequel. The war has rather changed our tolerance for photography. And these folk of the Five Towers are positively unbearably drab and uninspiring.

THE STRANGER'S WEDDING. By W. L. GEORGE. T. Fisher Unwin. 6*s*.

When you are told that Mr. W. L. George's "The Stranger's Wedding" deals with such inevitable problems as come between Oxford (St. Olave's) and a picture palace, you will know that there are many phases of life touched upon in this book. Mr. George's hero—if one is allowed to call a priggish, humourless, impatient creature by that name—comes away from Oxford and takes up Settlement work. There he meets a charwoman's daughter, and the way thereon to the end is marked by a corrugated-iron chapel, an evangelist, lectures on Ruskin, life in tenements, music-halls, and so on. Half-way through the entertainment there is a marriage, to which half, and the worst half, of the book is dedicated. And one need not emphasise the point that the union is not a successful one. "The Stranger's Wedding" will hardly add to Mr. George's reputation as a literary man, though it may possibly increase his popularity.

HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY

THE REAL OSCAR WILDE. By R. H. SHERARD. Werner Laurie. 12*s*. 6*d*. net.

More anecdotes about Oscar Wilde—his friends, and his enemies. A good deal about his enemies, in fact; and not a few sound appreciations upon art and life in general.

Interesting stuff, for those who find the subject interesting. There are some good touches in the Index.

THE SCOTTISH FRIEND OF FREDERIC THE GREAT. By MRS. EDITH E. CUTHELL. Two vols. Stanley Paul. 24*s*.

Messrs. Stanley Paul and Co. deserve our thanks for bringing out, at this time, books of such a kind. The life of the last Earl Marischall was in every way worth writing; and the author has worthily performed her task—a task, obviously, of no common difficulty and involving the collation of piles of correspondence and other old documents. From her labours among these relics we get glimpses, intimate glimpses, of such men as Frederic the Great, Voltaire, Rousseau, David Hume, the Young Pretender, and others of Keith's contemporaries—we gain, above all things, a knowledge of the admirable personality of Keith himself. There are numbers of capital illustrations.

MY HARVEST. By RICHARD WHITEING. Hodder and Stoughton. 10*s*. 6*d*. net.

Mr. Whiteing's "Harvest" was worth gathering. Indeed, the book gives one the sensation that its author has left untold many things we would like to know. A valuable document, these urbane chapters, for those who would learn something fresh about the times and the men who have just passed away. Whether he writes of life at home or in foreign countries—in Germany, and Italy, and France, and Russia—whether he writes of himself or others, Mr. Whiteing always contrives to say something of interest. More especially do we like what he tells us of the England of his younger days, its social and club life, its Press, and so forth. There is insight in these pages. and knowledge of human nature.

YEARS OF CHILDHOOD. By SERGE AKSAKOFF. Edward Arnold. 10*s*. 6*d*. net.

Mr. Duff, with this admirable rendering, has unearthed a treasure for the English reader. These memoirs of Aksakoff—how comes it that they have hitherto remained untranslated? Let us hope that the other portion of them, the "Family History," will appear in its turn, without delay. For this is Russia herself—convincingly real and intimate.

TRAVEL

THROUGH WONDERFUL INDIA AND BEYOND. By NORAH ROWAN HAMILTON. Holden and Hardingham. 12*s.* 6*d.* net.

THIS is a genuine traveller's work, and, written with a pleasing literary touch, bears the marks of objective sincerity and that delight which the East unfailingly exercises upon the uninitiated Western mind. It is good reading, and will unquestionably be useful to people travelling through India, and even to those at home who have never felt the sun of India and caught the spirit of the East the book has a savour which penetrates and creates for itself that atmosphere which to most of us will never be known.

WAR

THE RED HORIZON. By PATRICK MACGILL. Herbert Jenkins, Ltd. 5*s.* net.

IN many ways this record of Patrick Macgill explains the almost complete lack of literature produced by the war, and no doubt the reason is that reality is so much more terrible than the imagination. Certainly this is not the equal of the young writer's works in peace. The book contains nothing remarkable. It is good journalism, but personal and tinged with an objective sentimentalism which proclaims the Celt. So much for its literary side. Otherwise we recommend it heartily. The vignettes are sharp and short. Once started, one finds it difficult to stop. What more can a man at home want in war?

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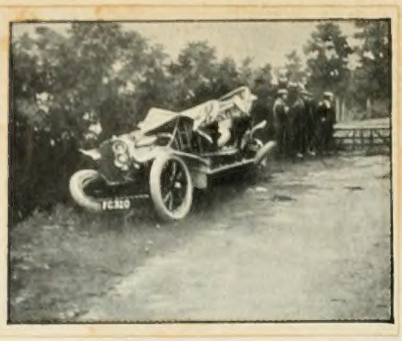

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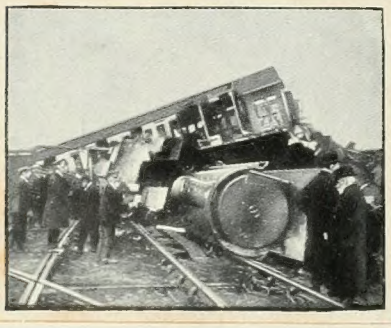

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